

**INSIDE**

Your quality Australian weekly soccer paper for the new millennium

# SOCCER

Registered with Australia Post as a publication PP224696/00050 - ISSN 1321-8980

January 25, 2000. \$3.00

## OLYMPIC SHOWS SOUTH WHO'S THE NEW BOSS

### Australia Day NSL preview issue



**W**hat if? You could go on all day with these hypotheticals, but the question has to be asked: if the World Club Championship was played this week how well would the current leaders Sydney Olympic have gone against Vasco, Necaxa and the ambivalent giants of world football Manchester United?

On the strength of their stylish demolition of Oceania champions South Melbourne at Belmore, Sydney Olympic may well have gone much better than their hapless visitors last Sunday.

But that's just speculation and we will never know anyway.

The reality is that with a full complement to choose from (something he has not been able to do lately), coach Branko Culina has a side capable of taking sides apart, and, most importantly for an NSL title-winning side, defending stoutly.

Yes, the keeper's position may be a little suspect at times (both Kourtis and Bouhoutsos have been used this year) but the defensive cabal of Juric, Baillie and Zoricich is experienced and wily enough to cover potential trouble.

Yet it is going forward where Olympic really fires the imagination. Gabriel Mendez is in the finest form of his career, Brett Emerton seems more content - and useful - playing wider, and upfront Pablo Cardozo (tipped for a Soccerroo call-up, see story page 21) is, well, Pablo Cardozo.

Add to this the emergence of Zlatko Arambasic as a goalscoring option, Scott Thomas, Marcus Phillips and Lindsay Wilson, plus exciting Nick Carle coming off the bench, and it's a side with all the hallmarks of a top-two finisher.

But before the Olympic fans get carried away there is the more pressing problem of a wounded South Melbourne tomorrow in the 'return' bout at Lakeside.

In the last two or three seasons there have been few sides capable of taking three points at their fortress.

However the main danger for Olympic will be pride. South's squad has enormous pride, built on their achievements of the last few years and instilled by a coach who has always maintained that team spirit is integral to success.

Maybe last Sunday was just a post-Brazil blip? They did after all stay there an extra five days.

South will not want to lose in front of their fans in their first home game back since their samba sojourn. Not only will it put their finals dreams - not to mention a 'three-peat' - even further out of reach, but it will also sour what was an excellent effort on behalf of Australian football.

Respect is something you earn, and that they earned Australian football after the three games in Brazil.

Respect is a word Newcastle Breakers coach Lee Sterrey has used over these last 15 months. He was adamant that he needed to 'bring back the respect' to the club.

That he has done.

Going into tomorrow's round 18 they sit deservedly in the top six in fifth spot. A run of two months without a loss gives the club the ideal platform for a finals finish.

And what a boost it would be for not only Newcastle but Australian soccer. If they can pull almost 8,000 to their Adelaide City Force game last Friday night (700 extra seats were provided) goodness knows what a finals match would bring.

Lee Sterrey deserves it, and the players deserve it.

Yet like Olympic, they face a tricky return against a side with great pride and history, tomorrow night at Hindmarsh. City needs a win to maintain the small amount of winning momentum they had built up.

Continued on page 12

**Plus: Paul Henderson, Ian Crook, Steve Laybutt, Tony Popovic, Chris Jones, Sean Babic, Paul Foster, Aussies Abroad, Greg Blake comments, NSL, NYL, win a Carlton music CD and the Soccerroo squad for Chile.**



# Crooky

Last Friday night's match against Carlton was a mixed night for Northern Spirit as we went down 1-0 after Troy Cranney was sent off in the 70th minute.

It was the second week in succession we have had to fight out the last 20 minutes of a match with 10 men and this time we couldn't do it, conceding a penalty in the 90th minute.

It was a match we didn't deserve to lose and we will be using the sour taste we had in our mouths to launch a quick revenge mission on Carlton at North Sydney Oval on Wednesday night.

Despite the loss Arnie and myself were very happy with a few things, especially the way we defended.

In our last two matches we have defended beautifully in open play.

The only goal we conceded against Perth came through a goalkeeper mistake by John Perosh, probably his first of the year, and last Friday night Carlton could only score via a penalty.

Both times we played a large portion of the game with just 10 men.

That can be put down to the way our back three have been playing with Matthew Bingley, Paul Bilokapic and Jack Sobczyk doing a fine job.

'Bingers' has adapted well to yet another change in position and has marshaled the troops well from sweeper with 'Billy' and Jack doing a great job as markers against two sides who have scored a lot of goals this year, Perth and Carlton.

Our problem, as it was last year, has been scoring goals and Arnie and I



have given the strikers and midfielders a free reign to show more initiative and be more inventive when we line up against Carlton at North Sydney Oval on Wednesday night.

The guys have been told to try things and break from our pattern to unlock the Carlton defence.

Arnie has two decisions to make before Wednesday night's game with Troy Cranney suspended and John Perosh once again available after he missed Friday night's match.

At this stage either Robbie Enes, who has recovered from a hamstring injury, or Adam Griffiths will play in the midfield alongside Michael Cunico and Robbie Slater.

A decision on whether to stick with Paul Henderson, who played well against Carlton, or put John Perosh back into the side, will not be made until the morning of the match as both guys have claims on the position.

Whoever gets the nod in goals, we are hoping they have quiet night as we go about extracting some revenge on Carlton in front of our fans at North Sydney Oval on Australia Day.

Ian Crook  
Northern Spirit and England

# S-news

Inside Soccer's  
Australian news  
and goss

## ON THE BUSES

Was it a bad omen? Falcons' bus left their hotel on Saturday night at 6pm bound for Parramatta Stadium ... or so they thought! When approaching the tollgates on the M4 one of the party asked politely, "Driver, where are we going?" The reply was, "Stadium Australia?". It took Gippsland Falcons 30 mins to get to the stadium, a trip that should have only taken 5-7 minutes. They were beaten 4-0. Memo to NSL team managers: Ask your driver before you leave hotel has he got inside Soccer's fixture list?

## HONKERS?

Bernd Hange has received an offer from Hong Kong? He spent the free weekend talking with Glory about his future. And Bobby Depotovski's now being courted by Marconi for 2000/2001?

## STEPTOE AND DAUGHTER

Did you know that Oceania's representative to FIFA, Charlie 'Steptoe' Dempsey's daughter is the General Secretary of the said OFC? Obviously no glass ceiling there! Dempsey of course is the man who said that that having hairdryers and games of draughts at the Oceania youth academy was "all a young boy could wish for...". He also didn't know the capital of NZ when writing in their own rag 'The Wave'. For a precis of the 'embarrassing' OFC qualifiers for WCC 2000, read Sitter, the fanzine. Don't you love being part of Oceania?

## STICCA LASHES NZ FA

Carlton Chairman Lou Sticca has aimed a broadside at the NZFA for calling up Carlton's Kiwi defenders, Mark Atkinson and Sean Douglas. To further compound his troubles, Sean Douglas injured his wrist by colliding with a photographer, and is in doubt indefinitely. "They called our players up for mickey mouse games against sides like Jamaica, long before their next World Cup qualifiers. We opposed it but FIFA overruled us. I just got off the phone after giving them a piece of my mind. It's indicative of Oceania's way of thinking this sort of thing. If you notice we did not buy Olyroo players this year, we want players who will be available to play for Carlton, and what has happened with NZ will influence our thinking when buying players in the future," said the Carlton boss.

## GRAPHIC REMINDER OF DRUG USE

For those who didn't see Diego Maradona on TV last week, you were the lucky ones. The once-great one has gone to Cuba to seek help in overcoming his drug problems. But to see him so overweight and speaking in such a slurred and slow manner is heartbreaking. We prefer to remember him circa 1986, when he was at the peak of his powers. Very very sad indeed and a perfect example of why drugs are so reviled in society.

## HEAVENLY NAME

The Youth Academy director at English Premier League side Southampton - nicknamed the Saints - is John Saintly. We're not joking.

## ALL WORK AND NO PLAY AT SOCAUS

That's if you're a "sheila"! The glass ceiling well and truly exists at Soccer Australia. Not only is Publicity Manager, Rozanna Bozabaljan, not allowed to travel overseas with the various national teams - including when the Joeys and the Young Socceroos played in World Cup tournaments - but neither is the Administrator of the national team, Bonnie Mersiades, able to travel with the Socceroos overseas. Too bad for Rozanna that while her media

clients get to tournaments in places like New Zealand and Nigeria, she's left waiting to put out media releases at unearthly times back in Oz. Too bad also that SocAus nonetheless sees fit to pay for certain well-connected journalists to travel overseas at their expense. Too bad also for Bonnie that her economy class air fare to accompany the Socceroos to Chile and Hungary was deemed to be too much when she's the one who deals with overseas and local clubs and players all the time; or that she's the only national team administrator in the Australian set-up who doesn't get to travel with her team - and, coincidentally, she's the only female doing such a role in this country. IS believes that if everyone at SocAus worked as well as Rozanna and Bonnie, our national body would be in much better shape. Maybe that's why the men in charge see fit to keep them at home? Can we have a comment please?

## POWER CREDIT UNION AND PARRA POWER

Did you know that you can buy merchandise (balls, replica shirts, sweat-shirts) at the Power Credit Union offices in Parramatta? Well now you do.

## STUDS UP: THE MILLENNIUM ISSUE

Studs Up is one of the best fanzines ever produced in Australian fanzine history. It's written by the fans and for the fans of Australian Soccer. Now before the cynics say 'but their editor writes for you', which is true, it still does not hide the fact that this is a bloody good read. It's out now, see ad in this issue for how you can get a copy. Highly recommended and good value too.

## SPIRIT FANS TRUE FANS?

S-news had the pleasure of giving some promotional copies of IS to Spirit fans at the Power v Falcons game. Quizzed as to why they were there (they had their Spirit shirts on, as you do) they said: "We support Australian Soccer." Perfect sentiment going into our national day.

## THE SQUIRREL GRIP THAT ENRAGED FALCONS

Falcons fans have been calling IS to let us know of their disgust over the recent red card of Manny Gotis. It may be another case of the referee missing the action. Gotis was given a vicious squirrel grip (Oxford English Dictionary: to grab the testicles of another NSL player and give them a good squeeze, causing victim immense pain) by an (unnamed) Strikers player (we know who). For his trouble, Gotis' push back got him a second yellow. Apparently the Striker couldn't look Gotis in the eye at the after-match dinner, a sure sign of guilt. Gotis had the marks on his crown jewels for a week to prove it!

## WOLVES FANS SPEAK OUT

It was good to speak with one of Wollongong Wolves' biggest fans, Sandro, last week. He said Wolves supporters were now sending letters in to newspapers on the south coast urging supporters to get behind what is arguably the most exciting team in the league. Sandro also says "Inside Soccer is the best paper for fans of Aussie Soccer. I hang out for it every Tuesday." Cheers!

## ALTERATION TO ROUND ONE CLASH IN VPL

The Victorian Premier League is about to start (see IS preview next week), and the Fed has advised us that the round one game on Saturday Feb 5 between Altona Magic and St Albans Saints has been moved to the Altona East Phoenix SC ground with an aryo kick-off of 4.00/6.00PM. (Melways ref: 55 C-5).

## INSIDE SOCCER

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Photography: Allsport, Joe Palos, Brett Kluznik, Matt Curtis, Michael Cronin

Publisher: Inside Soccer Pty Ltd

A.C.N. 088 107 822

Printing: Apex Printers Arncliffe NSW Tel: (02) 9597 6866

Distribution: Wrapaway, Marrickville NSW Tel: (02) 9550 1622

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# LOOK OUT CARLTON

## predicts confident Hendo



By Aidan Ormond

**N**ever mind the narrow 1-0 loss to Carlton last Friday night, Spirit keeper Paul 'Hendo' Henderson believes his side has turned the corner and he has issued this prediction to Carlton on the eve of their return bout at North Sydney tomorrow night.

"We can beat them because of our great home support. Over the last few weeks the team has played much better, and we played quite well against Carlton last Friday but they scored very late from a penalty after a red card to Troy Cranney. A draw would have been a fair result.

"To our fantastic fans I say, be patient ... we have the quality of players to make the six, no doubt and we can definitely beat Carlton tomorrow night," pre-

dicted an upbeat Henderson.

Last Friday night's game (see Kevin Christopher's match report on page 13) also saw another poor display by the man in the middle.

"All we ask for is consistency. If a player is not consistent then he gets dropped," said Henderson, who was rated as one of the best on ground.

Coach Graham Arnold backed up this assessment of the referee. Arnold was quoted as saying the "refereeing was consistent ... consistently bad."

Meanwhile Northern Spirit is lucky to have such depth in its goal-keeping ranks, with Henderson coming in for John Perosh, who has had an outstanding season for the NSL big guns after initially displacing Henderson early on in this campaign. Then there's Jess Van Strattan, one of the stars of last year's World Cup Final Joeys.

It is unclear at this stage which keeper will get the nod for the Carlton game now that Perosh is available again.

"I'm not too sure if I will play. JP's (John Perosh) been playing very well and I have big boots to fill. I would love to be playing tomorrow night at North Sydney ... we'll just have to see," said Henderson.

"The team spirit in our camp is really good.

"If you look at teams like Perth Glory,

they too struggled in year two but they are stronger now than ever before. Spirit is a very strong club that will be around for many years."

One player almost certain to play however is Carlton's Lubo Lapsansky. Henderson has tipped the little Blues midfielder to be the one most likely to cause Spirit damage.

"Lapsansky is their strong point, Carlton is physical and all-round very solid with strong defenders like Scottish international Dave McPherson, but Lubo can cause us damage from midfield."

And for those who may have thought that time out from the Spirit first team has dampened Henderson's enthusiasm, think again. The former Sutherland Shark is still in love with the life of a pro-footballer.

"It's fantastic. It's the best life. We train once or twice a day. I usually travel in with Paul Wearne to North Sydney, train in the morning and have lunch at North Sydney Leagues.

"In the afternoon we normally do specialist keeper training and we are home by 5.30pm. It's a sweet life, so there are no complaints from me when you do the thing you love.

"I am only 23 so I have plenty of time."

Henderson's attitude has been exemplary during his time away from the spotlight of regular first-team football. He is a model professional who should be in the game for many years. Right now



Paul Henderson: whether he plays or Perosh gets the nod, he is confident Spirit will deliver three points to their fans.

though, he will settle for a win against Carlton tomorrow night.

In Spirit news ... there will be a special pre-match game before the Carlton fixture on Australia Day this Wednesday.

Current Socceroo coach Frank Farina OAM (see story page 24) will lead an all-star Aussie side that will include former greats Joe Watson, Peter Katholos, Tony Pezzano, Gary Van Egmond, Rob Wheatley, Gerry Gomez, Tom McCulloch and Jim Patikas.

They will play a Rest of the World selection that will feature Alex McPherson and former Southampton player Mike Berry. It starts at 6pm.

Spirit is hoping for a repeat of last year when 17,722 turned up for the Australia Day encounter.

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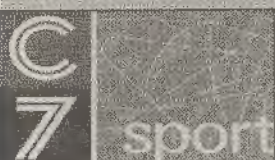
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I've got to say that I'm staggered at the amount of criticism that continues to be reserved for Sydney Olympic star and Olyroo skipper, Brett Emerton.

Most of it, mind, from his own local Sydneysiders.

And most of it delivered through the back door, either whispered in passing or mentioned discreetly over a quiet coffee.

Actually it's kind of funny to watch the same idiots who were sticking knives into the big bloke's back a few seconds beforehand play the fawning, pathetic 'give us an interview' types to his face.

His club coach, Branko Culina, is well aware of the pressure on Emerton to perform and 'Emo's not an idiot, he knows he's in the gunsights as well.

I had a go at drawing him on the issues of weight of expectation during the recent Olyroo series in Adelaide, but he dismissed it all with a laconic shrug of the shoulders.

I think he'd rather just get on with playing footy, but I'm sure he's wearing it all a little too hard.

Which is not at all fair.

Despite having to carry the millstone of being 'the next big thing' since he strode into senior footy in 1996 under then coach David Ratcliffe, Emerton has produced more than enough to validate his standing at club and international level.

And he's a kid, for goodness sakes.

At just 20 he can and still probably will be anything.

And 'Emo' if they don't appreciate you in your own back yard, head due south and you'll walk into any team you'd care to sign for.

At half-time this NSL season is still very much alive, but don't be surprised if the long-predicted Perth onslaught doesn't overwhelm the competition as the sea-

son bowls along towards the business end.

Brisbane are treading water, Olympic is off the boil and Carlton might be there or thereabouts, but they've not won the games that count against the clubs likely to be in contention at finals time.

Newcastle and Wollongong are giving us some much-needed romance, but the Breakers and Wolves simply don't win silverware.

In contrast, Perth Glory are looking very scary indeed.

Offensively venomous, sound at the back, invincible at home and now boasting Jason Petkovic to ice the cake, Perth is now the consensus favorite to take the NSL title to WA for the first time.

If they get top two and a couple of home finals, put down your glasses.

Everything about the equation is starting to equal Perth.

Their list goes very deep; the average age is a balanced 25 or so and with ten 100-plus gamers the Glory roster boasts a wealth of experience.

They've stayed pretty healthy thus far and going into the second half of the season the sun continues to shine on the Sandgropers, with the likes of Vinko Buljasic and Peter Buljan beating injuries and ready to rock 'n roll.

It's a good side and so long as the somewhat eclectic mix of personalities within the squad stay focused on the team goal, Bernd Stange's side is the one to watch.

All being well, Carlton's Andrew Marth should become the NSL's thirtieth 300-gamer around about round 20.

And the former back-to-back premiership captain of the Melbourne Knights is only a couple of goals from recording his 50th NSL strike, which ain't half bad for

a bloke who has spent a huge chunk of his career at the defensive end of the paddock.

A couple of weeks later South Melbourne skipper, Paul Trimboli, should break that club's long-standing games record of 338, currently held by former Soccerroo Steve Blair.

Trimboli has already played over 350 career games and is three goals off his century.

While Carlton's much-travelled John Markovski has already passed the 300-game and 100-goal double milestone, achieved only twice before him in NSL history.

I mention this merely for the forgotten common link between all three, that they all came through the ranks at, and started their senior footy with, former NSL club, Sunshine George Cross.

Clubs like St George and Sydney United are often lauded for their contribution to the NSL through junior development, but the Georgies certainly did their bit for the game when the trio of Markovski, Trimboli and Marth came off that club's production line during the 1980s.

Although the Georgies made up the numbers for most of their eight-year stay at NSL level (1984 through 1990/91), even in the club's final season they had some talent going around.

That year they debuted some notable home-growners like Frank Talia and Lorenz Kindtner, and also going around for the club in 1990/91 were guns in the mould of Fausto De Amicis, Craig and Paul Foster, Troy Cranney and Damian Mori.

Kind of makes you wonder why they were so crappy, doesn't it?

Apparently the sagely, wise old heads at Adelaide Force took some slight offence when this publication and gung-ho editor, Aidan Ormond, took that club to task over several issues some time back.

At the time the Adelaide club had just lost CEO Ned Coton and was showing a propensity for making some outwardly regressive decisions, such as the obvious one, to re-name the recently re-named Adelaide Force to a more traditional Adelaide City Force.

But while the club leaders bristled and blustered about the adverse publicity, I now know first hand that the rank and file were cheering 'Inside Soccer' along, all the way.

I've been fortunate enough to make a few mates in Adelaide over the years and I managed to catch up with several during the Olyroo series recently.

One of them, by the way, has tossed more than a few lazy pennies into the Adelaide Force coffers over the years and will pull the pin in protest, sooner rather than later.

The die-hards are furious at what they see is the dangerous direction the board is taking, what with the league set to be cut by four and a still red-hot Adelaide United bid ready to drop some rubber on the starting grid for the 2000/2001 season.

Which beckons the question as to who are the board actually representing, because they sure as heck have their own members rattled?

Just to prove beyond doubt that I helped put the anal in analyst, what a season Tommy Pondeljak is having at Sydney United.

At the start of the season I hardly rated Pondeljak in the list of the close-season's best transfers, but come mid-year and the former Melbourne Knights best-and-fairest winner has probably been as good as any going around in new colors.

Pondeljak was superb for a couple of seasons at Somers Street, but he

appeared to be going through the motions a bit last summer and the off-season move to re-building Sydney United beckoned as more of the same for the 24-year old.

David Ratcliffe's team haven't set the world on fire, but Pondeljak has well and truly shown a new-found maturity by putting his hand up and actively trying to lead United out of the wilderness.

To date Pondeljak hasn't missed a game and has been in United's best three players in many more games than he hasn't.

It's the toughest of asks to re-ignite the flame in a team not travelling well, but Tommy's done it the hard way and deserves a huge amount of credit.

I understand the news on Pondeljak's veteran teammate Val Kupresak isn't so good however, with the only recently crowned Sydney United club games record holder sidelined with a knee injury that might spell career end.

You hope not, because champs deserve to choose their own time to go.

C7 colleague and former South Melbourne champion himself, Paul Wade, did make an intriguing observation during the latter part of the World Club Championship, following his old club's exit from the series.

Wade believes that South Melbourne's approach to the series was not unlike that of Australian international teams to big games during his early years of wearing the green and gold, when he believes far too much respect was paid to the opposition.

"Instead of playing to strengths, often we'd go out too preoccupied with trying to hold out for a result, or at least try and limit the damage they could do," he said.

"I just don't think South Melbourne played anywhere near as well as they could have and as well as we've seen them, and maybe they shouldn't have been so reverential to the teams they played."

Apparently the lack of faith in South Melbourne's ability to even survive the WCC with some degree of credibility was not restricted to local harbingers of doom either.

As South Melbourne lined up in the players' tunnel before their first game at the Maracana, the story is that Fausto De Amicis, no mug when it comes to the Italian lingo, overheard an Italian on the officiating team for that game telling his comrades that "this lot (South Melbourne) are going to get hammered by six or seven."

Despite public persona suggesting the contrary, apparently Newcastle Breakers coach, Lee Sterrey, is in fact a complete bastard.

The wire services reported that following his club's record-breaking 3-2 win over league leader Sydney Olympic Sterrey was to "reward his players with horror beach runs."

"I'll slaughter the players this week with beach runs in heavy sand and then get back to ball work next week. I'll make sure it doesn't go to their heads," Sterrey is reported as saying.

Sterrey has allegedly confided to senior club officials that should the Breakers make the top six it's compulsory training at the local dog pound, through the confines of which players will be required to carry out a series of sprints wearing nothing but lamb chop necklaces.

"That should sharpen their evasive skills," Sterrey supposedly explained.

And a grand final win?

"What better than a group booking for this year's Hawaiian Ironman event. That'll teach 'em a bit of humility."

## MELBOURNE SPORTS BOOKS

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Steve Laybutt tangles with an Egyptian striker during the Olyroo games in Adelaide. Australia won 1-0.

By Aldan Ormond

**S**teve Laybutt made his Australian TV debut as a sideline comments man for C7 during the Olyroo v South Korea game at Hindmarsh Stadium. He is also set to make another debut when he steps out onto the park in the much-anticipated Parramatta Power v Northern Spirit clash this Saturday night. If his injury has healed, it should be his home debut.

"Yeah it was enjoyable, I've never done TV work before and working with Ivan Zelic, Blakey and Wadey was fun," said Power's new signing.

With Richard Plesa and now Laybutt Parramatta truly has a 'Power' defence going into the second half of the season; Olyroo Laybutt is delighted to have joined such a big club.

"It's very professional and I'm really looking forward to this Spirit game, the atmosphere should be excellent," he said after his first official training session with Parramatta last Friday (his medial ligaments injury prevented him from a full workout.)

He is rated only a possibility of playing tomorrow night (Wed.) at Falcons.

"I went on loan to Bellmare Hiratsuka for six months during the off-season here. The club is about 1.5 hrs from Tokyo. It was very professional and the league is strong so it has helped me as a player.

"It's good to play different styles of soccer, and playing in the J-league will help me in the long run."

After an Olyroo friendly against Japan last year Laybutt's agent followed up on interest to gain the strapping defender the short-term agreement.

Another Asian superpower - South Korea - has just played, and run rings around, the Olyroos. Laybutt saw them close up and was impressed.

"The South Koreans have always been fairly strong, but the Japanese are also getting much better. Look at their U/20s, who made the final of Nigeria '99 (where the Young Socceroos made an inglorious exit in the group stage.)

"Obviously the Japanese youth system is strong ... I wouldn't say they are heaps ahead of us here, but the fact that most of their players stay local obviously helps them a lot.

"And I was quite surprised at how big the Japanese players have become," said the burly defender.

"Living in Japan was easier because Chay Hews (now back in Brisbane) was sharing with me, but not too many speak English, then again, I was only there a short time. I had a translator for when my Japanese coach was talking, in fact, I

might need one for Lawrie McKinna here at Power!

"I did want to stay in Japan an extra 12 months, three clubs were interested but the date passed so I could not make the Jan 1 deadline.

"Power is a strong squad, I have seen them play a couple of times when I have been back here on holiday. I think that maybe they have been a bit unlucky. Defensively I hope I can help out," said the 22-year-old former Wolves and Brisbane Strikers player.

Laybutt strained his medial ligament the night before the Korea v Olyroo game, putting off his planned Parra debut on January 22 against Falcons. Logically, though, the future for the defender would be England. He agrees.

"England would probably suit my style but because I am full on Australian with no UK ancestry, it may be difficult with the paperwork. It will depend on how many Socceroo games I can get under my belt first ... I may have to try Belgium to help me get to England."

At the end of this Australian season - when his contract with Power expires - he may head back to Japan, or "it may be a good time to go to Europe..., who knows," reflected the Wollongong-born stopper.

Laybutt, who is going away with the Socceroos in February, is likely to miss even more games before his contract is up at the end of the season; there is a European Olyroo camp in March.

"Obviously I would like to play more games for Power, but national team duties



"I may have to get a translator for Lawrie McKinna," joked Laybutt.

come first."

Laybutt is raring to go for his new club and wants to make the most of his opportunities here. The club has made a shrewd signing and they are just happy that he is finally able to put on a Power shirt.

**POWER NEWS ...** 'Show your colours' is the theme of the Power v Spirit game this Saturday night at Parramatta Stadium.

Dress in your favourite club or NSL kit to be in the running for some great prizes. There will also be clowns and face painting.

Further, an exhibition game is planned starring the Harvey Norman All-Stars (kick-off 7pm.)


And see Power players at Harvey Norman in Penrith on Friday 28 Jan at 1.45 with the 2Day FM Black Thunders in conjunction with Power sponsors Electra. There will be lots of giveaways.

# Passion


of the West

# Spirit

of the North



**Parramatta Power**



**Northern Spirit**


## Saturday 29 January

at the 'Powerhouse'


(Parramatta Stadium)

### Youth League 5.00pm

### NSL Match 7.30pm



- Show your Colours - wear your favourite club or national soccer strip
- Tickets available from all Ticketek outlets including Parramatta Leagues Club and at the ground
- \$40 Family ticket available
- Free shuttle bus service from Parramatta Station from 5.30pm





## IT'S PARADISIS FOR SHARKS BUT EASTS' HELL CONTINUES

EASTERN SUBURBS 0  
SUTHERLAND SHARKS 1

Paradisi 53

Sunday night at David Phillips Field, Sydney.



By Peter Smith

**E**astern Suburbs disastrous start to the season continued on Sunday night when they went down to Sutherland Sharks 1-0 at David Phillips Field.

Despite being many pundits dark horses for a successful season, Easts have now lost their opening three games, all at home.

This was in truth a poor game exemplified by profligate finishing from both teams. However, the blustery conditions, bumpy pitch and some curious decisions from the match officials didn't help to raise the game as a spectacle either.

Yavuz Ekinici had the first chance of the game when he picked up a loose ball just inside the box but his shot clipped the bar with Dennes Olla in the Sutherland goal well beaten.

Just a minute later Matt Merralls pushed his shot just wide from 20 yards as Easts keeper Con Anastasiadis advanced to close down the angle in a one on one. Next it was Sutherland's turn to hit the bar when Adam Daley hit the bar with a header mid way through the first stanza.

Possibly the best chance of the game fell to ex Shark Peter Pulicino who saved his former club's blushes after a defensive mix up allowed him an unchallenged shot from 12 yards but he volleyed narrowly wide.

Further chances before the halftime

break to Easts Ben Deighan and Sutherland's Craig Hobbs were not converted and the teams went into the sheds without anything to show for their efforts.

The only goal of the game arrived after 53 minutes and it took a freak incident to get the scoreboard attendant active.

Sutherland's Con Paradisi drilled a free kick from all off 30 yards against the frame of the goal only for the ball to ricochet back onto the shoulder of Anastasiadis, who had been left rooted to the spot some five yards out from goal, and into the net.

The second half continued in much the same vein as the first with both teams squandering chances but neither really gaining any sort of ascendancy although Sutherland could claim to have had more territorial dominance.

For Sutherland Con Paradisi played well in the centre of midfield while captain Eddie Giraldo marshalled his defence well for their first clean sheet of the season.

For the home team Malcolm Nicholls give everything but coach John Calleja will be hoping the return of highly regarded striker Jim Aschner from suspension will help to alleviate their problems in front of goal.

Their match away to Fairfield Bulls will see something give as they are only two teams yet to pick up a point this season.

Sutherland on the other hand are in the top five for the first time since Round 4 1997 but will need more steadiness in front of goal next Saturday at home to the frugal Bankstown City if the are to maintain that position.

tain that position.

**S**t George stunned both the healthy Canterbury-Marrickville with a 4-0 trouncing at St George Stadium last Friday night. In doing so the Saints showed that they will be a genuine force to be reckoned in 2000.

Looking strong all over the park St George played an impressive possession game working hard off the ball yet maintaining their intensity for the full 90 minutes.

The first half was played at considerable pace with the humid conditions taking its toll on some players who struggled later in the game. Neither team was able to gain the ascendancy with few clear cut chances created.

Shots from St George's Jim Bakis and Achilles Markopolous flew narrowly wide whilst the Berries best chance was a sizzling Jose Mendes long range effort which was tipped over the bar.

Ten minutes into the second half came what was probably the games turning point. Canterbury midfielder Patrick Galloway fed the ball through to Jimmy Nikas who skipped away from the Saints defence before nimbly rounding advancing keeper Stacy Alogdellis only to fire his shot against the underside of the crossbar with just a still retreating Saints defender to beat.

Just ten minutes later Saints impressive former English professional Mark Brennan showed his class when a loose ball fell to him just outside the box and he rifled an unstoppable shot past Frank Mikuletic in the Canterbury goal.

If that didn't halt Canterbury's claim on the game the second goal just three minutes certainly did. Stefan Janic's low

**MATCH STATS**  
**EASTERN SUBURBS:** Con Anastasiadis, David Segreto, Matthew Dihn, Aaron Holst, Malcolm Nicholls, Steve McComb, Craig Sharpley, John Pillemer (David Blinoff 74), Yavuz Ekinici, Peter Pulicino (Manny Mitakidis 82), Ben Deighan

**SUTHERLAND:** Dennes Olla, Adam Daley, Eddie Giraldo, Grant McDonald, Dejan Ristovski (Cord Tolson 66), Clint Harrod, Con Paradisi, Craig Hobbs, Jimmy Corbo, Matt Merralls, Andrew Smith (Ali Salim 69)

shot could only be parried by Mikuletic into the path of Elias Augerinos who scored the simplest of goals. It was Augerinos's first for the club since signing from Sydney Olympic in the off season.

Patrick Galloway had a chance for the Berries a few minutes later but after that Canterbury were unable to match St George's intensity and it was no surprise when the Saints rounded off the game with two more goals.

Simon Verrinder and Angelo Petratos exchanged passes in a lovely sweeping move on 86 minutes before the later finished with a smart low drive into the far corner for 3-0.

Two minutes into injury time striker Jim Bakis showed a real striker's instinct by pouncing as the Berries defence hesitated over a long ball and he scored his third of the season to complete the rout.

**St George:** Alogdellis, Maglis, Kladis, Brennan, Severes, Bakis, Augerinos, Galea (Verrinder 79), Janic (Petratos 73), Markopolous (Boliantis 75), Watson

**Canterbury-Marrickville:** Mikuletic, Raeburn, Fedele (Kotsopoulos 64), Percy (Tsigolis 8), Mendes, Wells, Christoforidis, Nikas, Markopolous, Ferraro (Illic 65), Galloway

SUPER LEAGUE TABLE  
AFTER ROUND 3

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
LEICHHARDT TIGERS	3	3	0	0	11	5	9	6
Central Coast Coasties	3	2	1	0	6	2	7	4
St George Saints	3	2	0	1	6	2	6	4
Canterbury Marrickville	3	2	0	1	6	6	6	0
Sutherland Sharks	3	2	0	1	6	7	6	-1
Parramatta Eagles	3	1	2	0	7	2	5	5
Bankstown City Lions	3	1	2	0	2	1	5	1
Macarthur Rams	3	1	1	1	3	2	4	1
Blacktown City Demons	3	1	1	1	2	2	4	0
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	3	1	0	2	3	5	3	-2
Man. Warringah Dolphins	3	0	2	1	3	5	2	-2
Penrith Panthers	3	0	1	2	2	9	1	-7
Eastern Suburbs	3	0	0	3	1	5	0	-4
Fairfield Bulls	3	0	0	3	3	8	0	-5

## SUPER LEAGUE RESULTS: ROUND 3

		1st	U21	U18
Fairfield Bulls	Leichhardt Tigers	1-2	1-2	1-3
St George Saints	Canterbury Marrickville	4-0	1-2	3-2
Bonnyrigg White Eagles	Macarthur Rams	1-0	2-0	0-2
Penrith Panthers	Parramatta Eagles	0-5	2-4	1-1
Manly Warringah	Blacktown City Demons	0-0	1-2	1-2
Bankstown City Lions	Central Coast Coasties	1-1	0-1	2-1
Eastern Suburbs	Sutherland Sharks	0-1	2-2	2-1

## Super League



## Saturday 29 January 2000

Kick-off times 7.00pm (1st grade), 5.00pm (21s), 3.00pm (18s)

Macarthur Rams v Leichhardt, Bensley Road Sports Complex

Blacktown v Penrith, Gabbie Stadium

Sutherland Sharks v Bankstown, Seymour Shaw Park

Fairfield v Eastern Suburbs, Nineveh Field

Manly Warringah v Central Coast, Cromer Park

6.00pm (1st grade), 4.00pm (21s)

## Sunday 30 January 2000

Kick-off times 7.00pm (1st grade), 5.00pm (21s), 3.00pm (18s)

Parramatta Eagles v St George, Melita Stadium

Canterbury Marrickville v Bonnyrigg, Henson Park

Manly Warringah v Central Coast, Cromer Park - 5.00pm (18s)

Catch all the latest news on football in NSW in **Super Soccer OUT 27 January!**

[www.soccernsw.com.au](http://www.soccernsw.com.au)



# Demons fail to fire as Manly collects point



## MANLY WARRINGAH 0 BLACKTOWN DEMONS 0

Saturday night at Cromer Park, Manly.



Blacktown defenders Paul Yates coming to the rescue in the 16th minute and three minutes later Damien Foxe, returning to the Demons' line-up after missing last week's game with a groin strain.

The second half was a much closer encounter with Blacktown's reserve 'keeper Nathan Reid, standing in for the suspended Fernando Greco, twice denying McGuire.

Without injured star forward Jason Bennett, out with severe bruising of the ribs, Blacktown struggled to get control inside their opponent's goal area and in the end it was the Dolphins who came closest to snaring the three points, twice hitting the woodwork.

In the 62nd minute Jeremy Pettenton, signed by Manly from Leichhardt Tigers, saw his header nudge the crossbar and with five minutes of the match remaining, Martin Ranaldi pounced on a Blacktown defensive lapse but then watched disappointingly as his shot cannoned off the bottom of the upright.

In his after match summation, Demons' coach Brian Brown paid credit to Manly's dogged performance.

"We fell into their trap in the second half - they ran harder and chased harder and we hurried our game."

The Demons' reserves recorded their second win of the season getting up 2-1 with two thunderous hits from Roland Weber and Adam Kwasnik.

This Saturday it's the turn of another promoted side, Penrith Panthers, to do battle with Blacktown City, kicking off at the Gabbie Stadium at 7pm.

**B**lacktown City Demons failed to take advantage of their first half dominance, drawing nil-all againsts newly promoted Manly Warringah Dolphins in the round three NSW Super League clash at Cromer Park last Saturday evening.

Manly's coach, the vociferous Tony Pezzano, admitted after the game that the Dolphins intended to sit back for the first ten minutes of the game to draw the Demons' sting but he didn't expect them to be under the hammer for most of the first half.

However, for all their first period superiority, Blacktown only forced one save from a direct shot on goal, a blistering drive in the 36th minute from Naoki Imaiya, making his first start this season.

With Mark Hagger's first minute header just shaving the outside of the post and Paul Dee's three long range efforts flying just over the bar in the first ten minutes, it looked as though Blacktown's opening goal was only going to be a matter of when rather than if.

Close efforts from Paul Richardson in the 9th minute and Damien Brown in the 26th minute added to this belief but in this instance near enough wasn't good enough.

In fact Manly's best player on the day, forward Scott McGuire, twice broke away and nearly scored against the run of play. He was foiled on both occasions by the timely intervention of

## Super League summary round 3



**O**n Saturday there were four matches with wins for Bonnyrigg, Leichhardt and Parramatta, with Manly sharing the spoils with Blacktown (see match report on this page.)

Bonnyrigg White Eagles needed a goal from Michael Hawrysiuk six minutes into stoppage time to defeat the dogged Macarthur Rams 1-0 at the Serbian Centre.

Leichhardt Tigers continue to star at the top of the ladder with another come from behind win away from home, this time aided by a penalty from Steve Karavataki to win against Fairfield Bulls at Nineveh Field 2-1.

Hoenselaars had put the Bulls a goal up, but the Tigers drew level with a superb strike from James Stubbs-Mills after lead-up work by Yane Talceviski.

The Tigers played some awesome football, according to their coach Les de Celis and when Mite Talceviski was hacked down inside the box Karavataki made no mistake from the spot.

It was not the first penalty of the day to be claimed by the marauding Leichhardt, but other appeals were denied.

Penrith Panthers were hammered 5-0 by Parramatta Eagles with Scott Xuereb getting the visitors ahead just before the break.

Another goal soon after the restart by Nikolce Joseski, who added the third as well, and then Adam Anderson and Anthony Mittiga scored later, turning it into a rout at the finish.

With Canterbury beaten, anything other than a Central Coast win at Bankstown would have seen Leichhardt go to a clear lead at the top.

Bankstown Lions had Grozdanovski sent off against Central Coast after a scoreless first half, yet took the lead through Nabil Codmani midway through the second.

The Coasties then equalised with a Peter Preston penalty to make it 1-1 at the finish.

Coast remains unbeaten, but are now two points behind Leichhardt Tigers, the only side to win all three of their opening games.

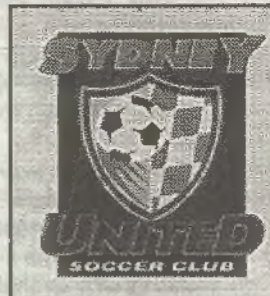
### TOP SCORERS

- 4 Steve Karavataki (Leichhardt Tigers)
- 3 Jim Bakis (St George), Nikolce Joseski (Parramatta)
- 2 Michael Galluzzo (Leichhardt), James Stubbs-Mills (Leichhardt), Eric Williams (Macarthur), Paul Roberts (Central Coast), Zoran Ilic (Canterbury), Anthony Mittiga (Parramatta), Peter Preston (Central Coast)

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# TONY POPOVIC: "I would like to play in Bundesliga after J-league"



Tony Popovic: Looking to Europe after the J-league.

By John Vrtaric

**T**he exodus of Australia's finest footballers over the last 15 or so years has seen most of them head for the riches available in the mecca of football, Europe.

Some, though, have ventured closer to our shores with a number of Aussies playing in the more lucrative Malaysia and Singapore leagues while a few have graced the fledgling professional league in Japan.

Tony Popovic is one these pioneers - for the last three years the elegant defender has been showcasing his talents for Sanfrecce Hiroshima FC in the J-League. Along with Graham Arnold, Popovic

followed former national team coach Eddie Thompson who had joined the Japanese outfit towards the end of the 1996.

Popovic and Arnold arrived in January of the following year.

Popovic has been blessed with exquisite timing as far as his career has been concerned.

He has been fortunate enough to be part of two of the greatest teams that Australia has produced - the '91 Young Socceroo and the '92 Olyroo squads. Both just missed out on the bronze medals losing their respective matches for third position.

The late 80's and early 90's was witness to the emergence of the talent laden Croat-Australian footballers sprouting from the production lines of Sydney Croatia and Melbourne Croatia. Popovic's contemporaries include Mark Babic, Zeljko Kalac and Mark Bosnich.

They made their debuts in the inaugural summer season of 1989-90 with both Babic and Kalac starting the first game of the season against South Melbourne while Popovic, aged 16, was on the bench.

Although the 193 centimetre tall Popovic played stopper in his junior days he started out as a left back with Sydney Croatia.

"When I first started I played left back and at sixteen you don't complain, you play where you get put, we had guys like Mark Jones and Alan Hunter playing in central defence."

The Syd Utd youngsters blossomed over the next two seasons and together with Robbie Stanton and the now Man Utd player Bosnich, were part of the Young Socceroos' campaign in Portugal '91.

Popovic's playing time in Portugal was limited in the three group games - each game he came off the bench with Preston's Robert Stojcevski being pre-

ferred in the left full back position and Babic partnering captain Paul Okon in the centre of the defence.

Australia won all three of its group games, including a superb one goal (a spectacular effort by Brad Maloney) win over Russia, to top the Group C table.

He didn't play at all in the quarter final win on penalties against Syria but was more than compensated with a full game for the next match.

And what a match that was. Playing the semi-final against the host nation in front of over 112,000 Popovic and his team-mates performed superbly, going down to a spectacular long-range goal from Rui Costa.

The play-off game for the third spot against Russia proved to be even closer than the group game and after a 1-1 draw, with David Seal scoring his third goal of the tournament, it came down to penalties again.

Popovic converted Australia's fifth penalty but unfortunately Stanton missed the next one and Russia edged out the Aussies for third spot.

Popovic reminisced about that tournament, "we had a top team, with Mark Bosnich and Paul Okon, it's something that I will always remember."

It wasn't long before Popovic scaled the heights again - Australia qualified for the '92 Barcelona Olympics after THAT goal from Ned Zelic against Holland and Popovic was one of the youngest players selected for the Games.

Although he didn't accumulate much playing time he did make an appearance late in the tournament as the Olyroos made the world fully aware of football in Australia with another semi-final appearance. Having lost the semi to Poland they again went home empty-handed with a loss for third place to Ghana.

Upon his return to Australia Popovic became part of a Sydney United team that over the next few years went on to estab-



lish themselves as one of the best teams of the 90s.

With Popovic and Babic eventually paired as twin stoppers they formed the nucleus of a strong defence that took the team to the brink of the top six in 92-93 and then into the finals for the next four years. In 96-97 the Branko Culina era ended with United crowned minor premiers, by nine points, but losing a historic grand final to Brisbane Strikers in front of over 40,000 fans.

Popovic didn't make that grand final as he had already departed for his adventure to Japan. And for a 23 year old moving to a country like Japan was indeed an adventure.

"It was a big shock at first and it took me three months to get used to, but having Graham Arnold, whom I got to know at Sydney Croatia before he went overseas, was a great help."

Happily married to long-time sweetheart Manda (who, according to Tony, while away her time going to the gym and spending Tony's hard earned money!) Popovic is coming towards the end of his contract with Hiroshima and looking for fresh challenges.

Ending his overseas career in Europe would be something that appeals to Popovic - "I wouldn't mind going to a country like Germany."

That and another top four finish with the full national team in the World Cup would round off a dream career for the talented Aussie defender.

## Valsport/Falcons partnership to continue

By Aidan Ormond

**I**talian Soccer bootmaker Valsport is strongly expected to continue its association this season with NSL side Gippsland Falcons. Talks are being held at the moment but an announcement is due in the next few weeks and should be related to junior development for the Falcons.

Last season Gippsland used the Valsport boots and, according to defender Manny Gotis, "they are excellent boots. I highly recommend them. We would like to help Valsport increase its profile in this country because it is a quality product."

Falcons officials were "delighted" to be in negotiations with Valsport, and believed it showed that the club was "on the move" in Australian soccer.

Golsport is the exclusive distributor of Valsport boots in Australia and New Zealand - the oldest soccer company in the world (established in 1920 and based in Padova.)



"Valsport believes Gippsland is very important because it is such a strong soccer area, and regional Australia is just as important as the city. So, with Gippsland Falcons, the flagship NSL side of the region, it was perfect for us," said David Magrone (pictured), MD of exclusive Valsport distributors Golsport.

Their top of the range boots were recently reviewed in *Soccer International* magazine, and were given an unequivocal thumbs up. Inside Soccer agrees after seeing and trying them ourselves.

They are very comfortable, have new technology studs design and instep and have the seal of approval not only from the Falcons, but also from Italian stars Roberto di Matteo, Costacurta and new Valsport signing Marco Delvecchio, one of the Serie A's new stars.

Valsport is also planning to move into team kits and casual wear, as well as junior boots, basic senior boots as well as

training equipment, which should be available at the end of the year.

"Valsport is a company solely dedicated to Soccer," said Magrone.

"In the next ten years our vision is to be knocking on the door of the big boys and taking market share.

"Anything to do with soccer we want to be able to supply. With equipment and clothing we feel we can do so much and right now our suppliers are real happy with the progress we have made here in Australia in just 18 months."

"I am sure with the quality of this product we will reach the status we deserve to reach," added Magrone.

Valsport will have a presence at a large trade fair in Munich, where Valsport's clothing range will be launched in Europe. Valsport boots are available at the following in Australia.

**NSW:** Action Pacific Sports, Cappe Sports, Ray Baartz Sports, Paul's Warehouse, Soccer City, Sportscene Bankstown, Menai, Corimal, Burwood, Fairfield, Maroubra and Wallsend.

**Vic:** Premier Direct Sports, World of



Soccer, Karl's Megasports in Gippsland, Pascoe Vale Sportscene, Reservoir Sportpower.

**SA:** Bailetti Sports, Campbelltown Sports, Ingle Farm Sportscene, Port Power Sports, Roberts and Jarman, Sportscene Reynella.

**WA:** Sports Forum, Soccer Unlimited, Sportz League

**QLD:** Soccer World







# AUSSIES on the world stage

A round-up of how our Aussies players fared abroad this last week ...

## MOORE GOALS!

**T**he Aussie presence in the English Premier League over the weekend was restricted to Mark Schwarzer's keeping goals for Middlesbrough and the 'wonder boy' Harry Kewell's Leeds played a top of the table clash against Sunderland.

Middlesbrough was attempting to get themselves out of a form slump when they visited Liverpool and with a tight defence and safe keeping from Schwarzer they managed to hold onto a 0-0 draw with the Aussie 'keeper playing a full game.

In the Leeds-Sunderland game Kewell, who has been in great goal scoring form of late, played a full game as Leeds had a 1-2 away win over Sunderland to retain the premiership lead over Manchester United.

Kewell had a relatively quiet game and was not able to maintain his recent goal scoring record.

The other Aussie 'keeper in the Premier League, Mark Bosnich, was seen in action over the weekend as his team, Manchester United, played the other big game of this round when they clashed with arch rivals Arsenal this morning (Tuesday).

Two other Australians were missing from their teams this weekend due to injury - Coventry's John Aloisi still out with a long term ailment while Richard Johnson missed Watford's slide down to last place on the ladder after a 3-2 loss away to Bradford.

In the Nationwide First Division the first match played on Friday featured a couple of Australians when Swindon, almost certainly doomed to the second division, was host to Crystal Palace.

Frank Tallia - formerly of Sunshine Georgies in Melbourne - was in goals for the home team, who trail the second last spot team by six points. They were beaten by four goals to one. Craig Foster, a cou-

ple of weeks back from injury, returned to the Palace starting line-up to play the full ninety minutes and score a goal in the 55th minute. Both Steve Mautone and returned Olyroo Nick Rizzo remained on the bench for Crystal Palace.

John Filan's return to the Blackburn team last week lasted only a few minutes and he will most likely require a shoulder surgery although his team could have done with his services as their run toward the top came to a sudden halt - third placed Barnsley thrashed them 5-1.

Crewe Alexander's slide back down towards the relegation zone, after a mini revival, continued when they were beaten 2-3 at home by Walsall. Jason Kearton was in goals for the home team who are now only one point away from the relegation zone.

West Bromwich Albion, with Jason Van Blerk playing a full game, gave itself some breathing space with a 0-0 draw at Nottingham Forest. The one point puts them one above Crewe and only two points outside the relegation zone.

Stan Lazaridis continues his return from injury and he came on in the 59th minute as his team Birmingham City lost at Port Vale by three goals to one - their promotion aspirations are fading.

One team that is moving itself away from the relegation zone is Sheffield United who beat second placed Manchester City at home by one goal to nil with Shaun Murphy again a dominant figure in the heart of United's defence.

Danny Tiatto was in City's starting line-up and played the full game but received a yellow card whilst Olyroo Danny Allsopp was not included in City's squad.

In the Stockport 1-1 home draw with Portsmouth both Aussies Andy Petterson and Mike Panopoulos remained on the bench for the visitors.

In Wolverhampton's 3-2 home win over QPR Kevin Muscat again played a full game for the home team while Steve Corica wasn't included in the squad.

For QPR-Aussie George Kulscar he remained on the bench for the whole game.

In the Nationwide Division Two Reading was again defeated, 3-1 by Luton, with Andrew Bernal starting for Reading and being replaced in the 71st minute.

Meanwhile Millwall beat fellow promotion aspirants Stoke 1-0 and find themselves in fourth spot only five points behind leaders Wigan but having played one game more. Tim Cahill played the whole game but Lucas Neill wasn't part of Millwall's squad.

In the Scottish Premier League Rangers returned to the action after a short break with a resounding 5-0 win over Aberdeen and their two Aussies were very much in the thick of the action.

Tony Vidmar and Craig Moore played the full game and both were booked.

Moore added to his excitement on the day by making the breakthrough in the 36th minute with a powerful header into the corner for only his second goal of the season following an inswinging corner from Giovanni van Bronckhorst.

In Celtic's 1-1 away draw with Kilmarnock Mark Viduka scored a goal in the 31st minute but the Bhoys are now relying on Rangers to lose matches as they are six points behind them and the leaders have a game in hand.

In Italy Paul Okon got onto the field in the 83rd minute as his team Fiorentina went down 1-0 away to Bari in a Serie A game.

Meanwhile in the Serie B Marco Bresciano came on in the 69th minute as Empoli drew 1-1 away to Fermana but



Craig Moore ... scored his second goal of the season and Rangers' opening goal.

compatriot Vince Grella wasn't included in the Empoli squad.

**M**eanwhile in other news, a player about to become an Aussie Abroad is young Scott McDonald. The 16 year Joey was one the stars of Australia's march to the final of the U/17 World Cup in New Zealand last year.

McDonald impressed many scouts and eventually had a hush-hush trial at English Premier League team Southampton last December.

Southampton boss Dave Jones was suitably impressed and quickly moved to snap up the youngster on a three year deal from the Victoria Institute of Sport.

# Ram

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### MCMASTER SAGA TAKES NEW TWIST

**T**he Jamie McMaster story continues with the Scottish FA to ask FIFA to investigate whether England acted within the rules in giving an U/16 cap to Jamie McMaster, Leeds United's Australian-born midfielder who comes from Scottish stock.

Scotland, and particularly their coach Craig Brown, feel that the English FA have broken an agreement signed by the four home nation associations in 1993 regarding Commonwealth footballers who qualify for British passports.

Under the agreement, such players can represent only the country to which they have the strongest bloodline. The SFA have a copy of the birth certificate of McMaster's father, who was born in Glasgow. McMaster's bloodline is to Scotland.

"We will raise the issue at the next meeting of the International Board on February 19," said a Scottish FA spokesman yesterday. "We want to know whether the FA made a mistake or whether they acted deliberately and that the 1993 agreement has gone by the board."

"At the agreement in 1993, the four home associations agreed that a player must have some kind of bloodline to play for one of the countries even though, under FIFA rules, anyone with a British passport can choose between the four nations."

Although upset at losing McMaster, who was invited to join a Scotland Under-16 party, the SFA clearly see the case as having wider ramifications.

Lancaster Gate, though, stress that they have played McMaster's selection by the FIFA book. "We cleared everything up before McMaster played for us," said an FA spokesman. "we went through everything with a fine tooth-comb."

"We have written confirmation from FIFA that McMaster is eligible to play for England. He wanted to play for England."

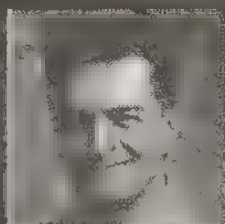
Soccer Australia were incensed when McMaster came on and scored for England's Under-16s in a UEFA international in Cyprus.

McMaster now has seven England caps, having played in a competitive fixture, he cannot now choose another country under FIFA rules.





# GREG BLAKE COMMENTS: New NSL criteria needs clarity and wider consultation



**A**lthough the sweeping changes to the NSL competition have been abruptly swept from the headlines, the culling of four clubs from the major domestic competition and the formation of a ten-team second division for the 2000/2001 season is still a major discussion point and certain argument starter in footy circles.

And as the dramatic revamp appears to be slipping dangerously away from public scrutiny the chances of getting critical questions answered by those in power becomes increasingly more remote.

We haven't heard a squeak from the authorities since the decisions were taken, yet I'm still far from clear on several issues and I think we deserve some straight answers, on some bloody critical issues, as well.

For example:

- Which clubs will get the flick from the major league - and on what basis - if (or, more accurately, when) it is established that more or less than the magical number of twelve clubs fit the criteria?

- If this is to be the ultimate national league, the best of the best, Crème de la crème, the definitive NSL based on adherence to strict criteria, the elite, why is it that we'll compromise its integrity and status within 12 months by introducing automatic promotion and relegation?

- If SA is working to a plan that should, at least in part, address proportional representation from the capital cities and embrace a regional presence, how does that co-exist alongside automatic promotion and relegation, particularly if the second division is restricted only to clubs from metropolitan Sydney and Melbourne?

- Is there a definitive working plan at all for promotion and relegation, or are we winging it as happened back in 1979, when the ill-conceived automatic promotion and relegation of the time became a mockery when the team which finished

dead-last, South Melbourne, was deemed too valuable to lose to the NSL and we dumped on Sydney Olympic instead?

- Are there 'protected' clubs, or is it possible that we could lose a Perth Glory to a Blacktown City, or the entire Adelaide market to an Altona Magic?

- On the basis that the bargain-basement figures touted to run a particularly modest second division, how will clubs in that competition, with a suggested annual wage bill of around \$300,000, address the (absolute) minimum shortfall of around \$1.2 million required for annual wages to merely become competitive on today's NSL standards, should that club win promotion?

- And finally, where will SA find the folding stuff to finance the legal defences against the inevitable avalanche of law suits to come if the above-mentioned issues - and several others to boot - aren't addressed quite thoroughly before ambitiously pressing ahead with such radical changes?

And there are probably a dozen more where they came from.

Most everyone I know with a background in the local game can usually recall all too readily the gory details of one or more half-arsed, hare-brained schemes embraced by the powerbrokers of the day which have come back to haunt the game, either by direct hit or through the ripple effect.

Whether we require the changes to the NSL or not is purely subjective, but taken that it's a given that we do now press ahead let's do it sensibly, publicly - hopefully initiating input and expertise from all areas of the game - and with a fair old slab of foresight, a characteristic not immediately associated with some of the previous custodians of the game in this country.

I would argue that every contentious issue mentioned above should have been debated and addressed long before the NSL clubs, the SA stakeholders and the board voted on reconfiguring the NSL last

month, and that the perceived problems can be easily resolved.

As the time window on instituting such sweeping plans closes rapidly, I certainly hope so.

But at this stage all we've heard are (more) grand plans, and for a cynical bastard like me that's not nearly enough any more.

We might be only the mugs who follow and support our clubs, week-in, week-out, or the folks who open and close the canteens, or the codgers who mark the lines, or devotees who assiduously keep stats, or drunks who prop up the social club bar, or has-beens who still worship at their personal field of dreams.

But it is still our game.

Given that 'Inside Soccer' is now acknowledged by the market place as the most widely-read dedicated domestic soccer rag going around, it is not being ego-centric to suggest that you can bet all your Monopoly money that at least one of the game's decision makers has had a read of this issue, and this particular story.

It took me two-hours to write this, thus it shouldn't be too much time out of someone's day to offer a reply on behalf of the governing body.

Perhaps specifically addressing the possibly problematical issues, point by point, as specified above.

And I'll have that without the platitudes, thanks.

So there's the gauntlet being tossed in the dust.

Let's have a little something concrete, maybe even in time for our next edition, to allay a few fears and show that Soccer Australia believes in the public's right to know.

By the way, the postal address is PO BOX 3889, Parramatta, NSW, 2124 and we're on Email at editor@insidesoccer.com.au.

**G**ee, the season hit the half-way mark at the weekend and we still haven't officially heard squat about the

long-awaited pow-wow between the refs, Soccer Australia, the clubs, coaches and players.

Still, at least we appear to be over the embarrassing nine and ten red card weekends of early season, and with public indignation only minimal we shall endeavour to keep it that way. Just a brief update on the 'Hanging Judge' count, with Matthew Breeze getting a double at Gippsland in round 16 (see S-news for 'squirrel grip' story) to give him double figures for the season and outright leadership with ten red cards.

Mind you, after watching vision of the running stoush between the Falcons and Brisbane it was one of the rare occasions when you reckon that a couple of blokes actually got off pretty lightly. Claudio Canosa would have loved it.

**P**erhaps the SA publicity machine is stalling too often or, more likely, our game is still blatantly ignored (no shocks there) by the mainstreamers.

Either way, it always sucks in a big way.

Presumably a regular feature of the sports pages of the weekend 'Australian' is 'Weekend Watch', a rundown of what's happening where around the nation.

Maybe I just happened on to a dud edition, but last weekend cycling got a gig, as did canoeing, and yachting, and even softball, for gosh sakes - softball!

Bet they had to turn on the water cannons at the turnstiles to hold back the crowds at that one.

However, no mention of the final round of the Four Nations Tournament that weekend, nor the full round of NSL.

This is not unusual, in fact if you've worked in soccer for more than 12 months it's like bloody 'Groundhog Day'.

## This time we'll qualify for Confed Cup vows Scarsella

By New Zealand's Weekly Soccer Observer

**F**ollowing an Oceania FC Executive meeting two weekends ago, Soccer Australia have announced the following plans for this year's FIFA tournaments:

Soccer Australia will use its overseas stars in the Confederations Cup qualifiers in a bid to pick up a \$3 million winners' cheque.

The qualifiers will be played in Papeete, Tahiti during June 6-14 after the end of the European season, comments THE AUSTRALIAN allowing such stars as Paul Okon, Mark Bosnich, Harry Kewell, Mark Viduka and Tony Vidmar to be available to play against Tahiti, Fiji, the Solomon Islands and New Zealand for the right to be represent Oceania in the finals.

The teams to join Australia and New Zealand will be dependent upon who finishes first and second from each of the Polynesian Cup (Tahiti April 8-15) and Melanesian Cup (Fiji April 8-15) competitions.

FIFA is yet to determine a venue or date for the finals, which will be staged

next year. There is talk of Australia as a likely host.

The champion nation from each of the seven FIFA confederations plus the hosts automatically earn \$1m per game at the finals. The finalists each play three group matches with the top two from each group qualifying for the semi-final, the winners of which play in the final.

Soccer Australia chairman Basil Scarsella promised that "the same mistake won't be made twice" - a reference to the body blow the Socceroos received when they were bundled out by New Zealand in the final of the Oceania Nations Cup in Brisbane during October 1998.

A team of locally-based Australians cruised into the final with a series of huge wins, including a 16-0 demolition of the Cook Islands, but they were beaten 1-0 by the Kiwis, who earned \$3m when they played in the cup finals in Mexico last year.

The loss, described as a disgrace and a catastrophe, was a crippling blow for SocAus as it struggled financially, at one stage being on the verge of bankruptcy.

"We learned a very hard lesson in Brisbane . . . one we will never forget," Scarsella said yesterday.

"The money would have gone a long way to solving our problems but, instead, we were left to rue a terrible mistake that nearly sent us under. This time we will use all our best players - no question about that."

National coach Frank Farina was delighted to hear the qualifiers would be held between June 20 and 28.

"Some people might say it will be overkill to use the Kewells, Vidukas and Okons against Tahiti, Cook Islands, et cetera, but these days you just cannot afford to take things for granted," Farina said. "The timing of the qualifiers is perfect and I'll use the best I can."

"I was in Brisbane when we lost to New Zealand and it wasn't a pleasant experience."

Apart from the Socceroos, who will compete in a tournament in Chile next month, the Confederations Cup campaign and several friendlies at home and overseas, SA will fund an Olyroo camp in Europe and a four-nation tournament in Australia during June as well as the Joeys'



(under-17s) Oceania World Youth Cup qualifiers.

The Joeys and Young Socceroos, who play their qualifiers in January next year, will be aiming to qualify for World Cup finals in Trinidad and Tobago (April 2001) and Argentina (2001) respectively.

Also a new Oceania U15 Tournament is to be introduced in 2001.



# Australia Day NSL round 18 preview



Continued from front page

Newcastle will be happy with a draw to keep up an amazing unbeaten sequence

Another regional side doing itself proud is Wollongong Wolves. They could actually be league-leaders on Wednesday night if results go their way

The side - currently sitting in second spot on point behind Olympic and with an extra goal scored - is a credit to the adventurous coaching of Nick Theodorakopoulos.

The players are also receiving their due recognition (wingback Scott Chipperfield should also be named in the Soccerroos this week.)

The club really does deserve more fans to Brandon Park though. The weekend figure of over 5,000 was encouraging, but how many were Sydney United supporters?

We've said it before and we'll say it again. If Northern Spirit played like Wolves, they would be averaging 18,000 at North Sydney.

Wolves go to Sydney United's Edensor Park full of confidence. Last

time United played at home the league-leaders were toppled. Will the second-placed side be beaten as well?

As new United captain Eddie Bosnar said to IS this week, "the side is basically a good side but we just are not having too much luck in front of goals."

When their luck changes, look out, but Wolves are the form team of the two right now.

Parramatta Power looked like they too had been to Brazil for a holiday. Looking tanned and refreshed they ran over the top of a plucky Gippsland Falcons outfit last Saturday at Parramatta Stadium.

Travelling to Gippsland is never easy for the visitors, but in this form Power looks irresistible leading into tomorrow night's return clash at Mobil Park.

The addition of Laybutt will strengthen a defence that has just been boosted by the return of captain Richard Plesa, although Laybutt may not make his debut until the Saturday night blockbuster against Spirit at Parra Stadium.

Falcons too will see the return of a tough central defender in the form of Manny Gotis. He was red-carded against Strikers recently (see S-news for the 'squirrel grip' story).

John Hutchinson - that tigerish little midfielder from Falcons - is due for a big game to celebrate his 50 NSL games, racked up last weekend in Sydney.

Gippsland rarely is easy at home but Power's form is ominous.

A finals finish is not out of the question yet for David Mitchell's men

Marconi's win on Saturday was a much-

## WELCOME TO THE NSL PAGE



All NSL games from last weekend are on pages 13-19, with the NYL round-up from both north and south is on page 20

### Fixture changes:

\*Please note that the R21 game between Olympic and Wolves at Belmore will start at 5pm on Sunday Feb 13

\* R23 Carlton v Force game at Olympic Park will be played on Sat. Feb 26 at 7pm

\* R24 game between Cosmos and Carlton at Bruce Stadium will be played on Tuesday March 7 at 7.30pm

## TEAM OF THE WEEK

## NEWCASTLE BREAKERS



	(Overall)									(Home)					(Away)				
	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD	W	D	L	F	A	W	D	L	F	A	
SYDNEY OLYMPIC	17	10	3	4	32	16	33	16	4	3	1	17	7	6	0	3	15	9	
Wollongong Wolves	17	9	5	3	33	24	32	9	7	0	2	19	12	2	5	1	14	12	
Carlton	16	8	5	3	30	17	27	13	5	3	1	16	8	3	2	2	14	9	
Perth Glory	16	8	5	3	30	18	29	12	5	2	1	19	9	3	3	2	11	9	
Newcastle Breakers	16	8	5	3	23	19	29	4	5	3	1	16	12	3	2	2	7	7	
Brisbane Strikers	17	8	4	5	26	16	28	10	4	3	2	18	9	4	1	3	8	7	
Marconi Stallions	16	8	2	6	22	21	21	1	4	0	3	9	10	4	2	3	13	11	
Football Kingz	15	5	5	5	26	27	20	-1	2	3	2	13	15	3	2	3	13	12	
Northern Spirit	17	6	2	9	16	23	20	-7	3	1	4	8	11	3	1	5	8	12	
Gippsland Falcons	17	5	5	7	12	20	20	-8	3	2	3	7	7	2	3	4	5	13	
Parramatta Power	15	5	3	7	27	26	18	1	3	3	3	15	11	2	0	4	12	15	
Adelaide Force	17	4	6	7	16	19	18	-3	3	2	2	9	7	1	4	5	7	12	
South Melbourne	15	5	3	7	22	27	18	-5	4	2	1	16	7	1	1	6	6	20	
Canberra Cosmos	17	4	3	10	21	32	15	-11	2	1	5	10	11	2	2	5	11	21	
Melbourne Knights	17	4	3	10	16	33	15	-17	3	2	4	8	9	1	1	6	8	24	
Sydney United	17	3	3	11	10	24	12	-14	3	1	5	7	10	0	2	6	3	14	

Produced with the assistance of McRopod Concept Sports Systems - www.planet.net.au/~mcropod. Note some sides have played less games than others.

NSL TABLE AFTER ROUND 17

## NSL TOP SCORERS:



<b>PAUL FOSTER (Strikers)</b>	<b>11 goals</b>
PABLO CARDOZO (SO)	9
MICHAEL CURCJA (SM)	9
ALEX MOREIRA (CAR)	9
CON BOUTSIANIS (PG)	9
SASO PETROVSKI (WW)	9

### CROWD COMPARISON:

Cumulative to Round 17

99/00: 708,276

98/99: 704,980



# Late penalty earns Carlton the points

## CARLTON 1

Marth 90

## NORTHERN SPIRIT 0

Friday night at Olympic Park, Melbourne. Crowd 2,143.



### MATCH STATS:



**CARLTON:**  
Anastasiadis,  
Azzopardi,  
McPherson, Deans,  
Terminello, Thompson,  
Packer (Conroy 84),  
Marth, Lapsansky,  
Markovski (Martin 68),  
Moreira



**NORTHERN SPIRIT:**  
Henderson, Bingley,  
Sobczyk, Bilokapic,  
Langdon, Cunico,

Casserley, T.Cranney, Slater  
(Catanzaro 62), Perinich, Seal  
(R.Griffiths 79).

### Yellows:

Carlton: Thompson 57, Packer 64  
Spirit: Sobczyk 51, Bingley 75

### Best Players:

3. Lapsansky (Carl)  
2. Thompson (Carl)  
1. Henderson (Spirit)

Referee: Matthew Breeze

By Kevin Christopher

Justice arrives via a strange path sometimes. Having been denied a clear penalty in the opening minutes, Carlton were awarded a spot kick in the shadows of full time to clinch all three points against a determined but ultimately directionless Northern Spirit last Friday night.

Sandwiched between those two notable moments were some of the most baffling refereeing decisions seen this season, effectively reducing the match to a lottery.

The referees are often labelled inconsistent, but this writer must go on the record as saying they have been consistently bad, and it has reached the stage where coaches are actually warning their players pre-match about certain officials.

Referee Matthew Breeze, never afraid to brandish a red card, sent Troy Cranney for an early shower after seventy-one minutes when he inexplicably kicked out at Andrew Packer after a 50/50 challenge had seen the ball squirt free for the Carlton player to burst clear down the left flank.

It was certainly out-of-character for Cranney, but his expulsion allowed Carlton to turn up the heat and the final twenty minutes saw Northern Spirit pinned in their own penalty box for long periods, defending not only against a rampant Carlton but a strong breeze as well.

In the end, the pressure proved too much and Matthew Langdon, who had enjoyed a busy game, mistimed a tackle on David Terminello and captain Andrew Marth dispatched the penalty safely away, high to Paul Henderson's left.

To be fair, Carlton deserved to win the game. Blues' keeper Dean Anastasiadis was rarely in the play, while at the other end Henderson (recalled following the suspension of John Perosh) was amongst his team's best players, con-

stantly having to deal with the stream of crosses into the eighteen yard box.

In front of their smallest home crowd of the season, Carlton found it hard to get into top gear in the almost wintry conditions although much credit for that should be attributed to the visitors who repeatedly harassed the Blues into unforced errors.

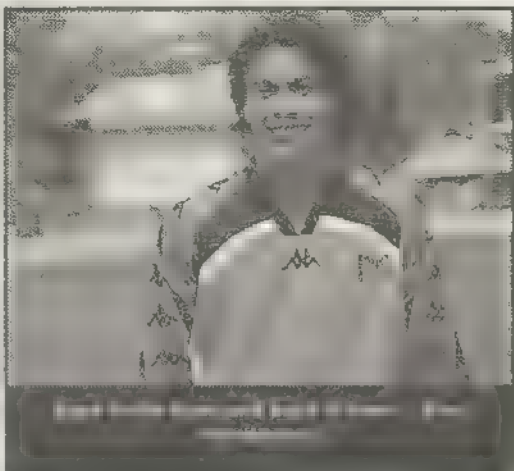
It was an important victory for Carlton, who were still without experienced Kiwi pair Sean Douglas and Mark Atkinson through international duty, while Stuart Slater's enforced absence through injury prompted yet another midfield shuffle with Thompson dropping back to allow Markovski to partner Moreira up front.

Although the partnership failed to reap a dividend against Northern Spirit, it is worth considering the fact that Carlton have three wins from three matches when Thompson, Markovski and Moreira are all in the starting line-up.

The home team started the better and should have had a penalty in the fifth minute.

Alex Moreira was bowled over by Luke Casserley when he latched on to a superb Marth pass but Matthew Breeze waved play on to give the Spirit their first lucky escape of the evening.

As the first half progressed the visitors got more involved in their opponent's



half and Cranney should have scored with a close range header after getting on the end of a deep Langdon cross.

Moments later, some hesitancy between Dean Anastasiadis and Colin Azzopardi almost gifted a goal to David Seal, but his goal-bound header was cleared by Deans before Perinich had a chance to complete the formalities.

Both teams were happy to shoot from long range but shots on target were rare, with most of the interest centering on the midfield battles involving Marth, Lapsansky, Slater and Cranney. All quality players, and all quality passers of the ball, but too often the gap between the midfielders and strikers conspired with the conditions to send passes astray.

The second half was a more entertaining affair, and Archie Thompson signalled his intentions early, exchanging passes with Packer and cutting inside Robbie Slater but his low shot was com-

fortably saved at the near post by Henderson.

Thompson was the centre of attention again shortly after, when he was booked for diving after being hacked down by Matthew Bingley. As Graham Arnold admitted later, "I actually thought that was a yellow card for Bingley, you could hear him kicking Thompson from where I was!" It would have made things interesting later in the game when Bingley was booked for a foul on Lapsansky.

By that stage Spirit were already down to ten men, with Troy Cranney's dismissal complicating their problems in midfield following Robbie Slater's withdrawal just after the hour.

With the wind at their backs most Carlton players were happy to shoot on sight, although most efforts finished in or around the beer tent. In true 'Big John' style, Markovski managed to belt one free kick out of the stadium, with the ball last seen bouncing across Swan St.

But the busiest player on the park in the final twenty minutes was Paul Henderson. His aerial work was generally

excellent, and he denied Moreira seven minutes from time with a spectacular reflex save after the Brazilian

connected with a sweet volley barely ten metres from goal.

David McPherson came up from the back to fire a header just wide of an upright, while Moreira managed to get the ball in the net but was correctly ruled have pushed Casserley.

It wasn't the greatest Carlton performance, but with just two points from their previous three starts, the club was in danger of losing touch with the leaders. In that context, the three points earned here were worth much more.

In what is slowly becoming customary this season, the bulk of the post-match press conference centered around the standard of officiating, but to report what was said would, sadly, most likely be viewed as inviting charges of bringing the game into disrepute.

Suffice to say that most people within the game are becoming fed up with the frequency of blatantly wrong decisions having a major effect on the outcome of matches.

Spirit coach Graham Arnold was not complaining about the decisive late-minute penalty on this occasion, however.

"I thought it was a penalty, I'm not arguing about that. Langdon was caught on the wrong side of the player. I thought we battled well, I thought we did quite well in the first half. The sending off killed the game, really. Once that happened, and against the wind, it's just a matter of survival.

"It's disappointing. Carlton are a good side and we hoped to get a point down here and then take them to our place on Wednesday."

Based on this showing however, the best Spirit can hope for now is to prevent the Blues from sweeping the



series

Munro was obviously pleased to take all three points on offer but was reluctant to get carried away with the performance.

"I thought our second half performance alone allowed us to win the game. We started the game reasonably well but then we sat back and allowed Spirit to dictate terms for twenty minutes, even longer.

"We seemed to get renewed confidence in the second half and their goalkeeper produced several fantastic saves. It was pleasing to win, albeit at the very end with a penalty kick."

As things threaten to get even tighter at the top of the table, it will be even more pleasing if the Blues can win their next home fixture on Saturday night - against leaders Sydney Olympic.

SU44 - The Millenium Issue  
(Just in case the Y2K bug actually does something)



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# Catlin celebrates 300 with another Breakers win

**NEWCASTLE BREAKERS 1**  
Wieczorek 76.

**ADELAIDE CITY FORCE 0**

Friday night at Breakers Stadium, Newcastle. Crowd 7674.



## MATCH STATS:



### NEWCASTLE BREAKERS:

Catlin, Pryce, Roberts, McManus, Sprod, Wilson, Buonavoglia (Smith 82), Wieczorek (Tancheski 91), Trpceviski (Owens 74), Harper, Moore



### ADELAIDE CITY FORCE:

Knezevic, Hornjik, Tobin (Hassell 49), Mori, Veart, Sabljak (Brain 66), Vidmar, Kemp, Costanzo, Pelosi, Kim

**Yellows:**  
None

### Best Players

3. TODD MCMANUS (BREAKERS)
2. Angelo Costanzo (Force)
1. Vasko Trpceviski (Breakers)

Referee Simon Micallef

Catlin replied "It's a night I'll remember for the rest of my life. It was perfect."

"Everything went my way tonight. I was a bit worried before the game with all the hype this week and maybe it might be me that lets the team down - it wasn't to be. It was to be my night and the team's night and I'm very happy with the outcome."



Adelaide's best Angelo Costanzo

It wasn't until the 36th minute when a real goal scoring opportunity arose. Breakers' skipper Shane Pryce sent a precise curling cross from the right but Andy Harper's header shaved the outside of the left hand post.

Five minutes later the Force were certain to score when Mori squeezed between McManus and Glenn Moore and rounded Bobby Catlin to set up an open goal. As Mori was about to side foot the ball home Andy Roberts sprung from nowhere to poke the ball away from Mori's feet leaving both teams scoreless at half time.

The Breakers attacked early in the second half and should have hit the lead

Buonavoglia worked down the right beating two Adelaide defenders. He sent a pinpoint pass to Andy Harper who mis-kicked his shot. Fortunately the ball fell to Mark Wilson on the penalty spot but he blasted the great chance over the bar.

Adelaide's defence were dealt a huge blow several minutes later when captain Alex Tobin hobbled off injured and was replaced by Bradley Hassell

In the 55th minute a goalmouth scramble from an Adelaide corner fell to Mori's feet, however Catlin was on hand to smother the shot.

The defining moment of the match came in the 76th minute when left mid-fielder Brad Wieczorek scored the winner from just inside the eighteen-yard box.

Mark Wilson crossed low and hard from the right. The cross was amazingly missed by two Adelaide defenders and Wieczorek was on hand to drive the ball low and hard with his reliable left foot.

One minute later Hassell nearly equalised for the Force when the buoyant and confident Catlin saved his far post header.

In the 83rd minute Mark Wilson nearly engineered a goal from nothing when he brilliantly turned Atila Hornjik and Dong Ki Kim on the left. His left foot strike was goal bound when it was cleared by Carl Veart.

Nothing was going to stop Bob Catlin from enjoying his night when three minutes into injury time a thirty metre Mori free kick weaved through a maze of players to leave Catlin unsighted. However, Catlin still brilliantly saved to his left to give the Breakers three on the trot in the new millennium

Breakers' coach Lee Sterrey has run out of superlatives for his team's amazing run in the competition. "It was a good performance tonight because we stayed positive in what we tried to do."

"You have to stay patient against Adelaide - they are a very hard side to beat. We had to string some passes together to be patient. We did a good job that way. We didn't force it too quickly and we pinched the goal that counted at the end of the day."



• A more than usual sombre Zoran Matic put his team's loss down to "I lost my voice at the end of that game. The Breakers deserved that win. They were determined; they defended well and were dangerous on the breaks. We made some bad mistakes during the game, but we're only human."

Matic was downbeat on his team's ever increasing difficult task of making the playoffs. "We'll take one game at a time. We got no points to be able to discuss semi finals"

The Newcastle Breakers are now unbeaten in nine games with seven wins and two draws, but their playoff aspira-



tions will be tested in the next two weeks in what Sterrey describes as the "road trip from hell."

Newcastle play Adelaide away on Australia Day, South Melbourne on Sunday at Bob Jane Stadium, then host South Melbourne the following Wednesday, and back up with an away trip to Wollongong the next Sunday



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# Rested Power blitzes sorry Falcons

## PARRAMATTA POWER 4

M Sterjovski 10, J Vrkic 21, W Ardone 57, J Burns 85.

## GIPPSLAND FALCONS 0

Saturday night at Parramatta Stadium. Crowd: 3,222.



### MATCH STATS:



**PARRAMATTA POWER:** M Gibson, R Plesa (C), D Barrett, J Vrkic, M Byrnes, M Santalab, S Berry, J Burns, W Ardone (J Gibson 75), M

Sterjovski (J Angelucci 74), J Griffiths (L Campbell 78)



**GIPPSLAND FALCONS:** B Jevdjovic, D Fak, D Marcina, M Durakovic, A Vargas (S Robertson 71), C Bell (J Bunagiar 81), A Savage

(R Puca 65), P Kakos, J Hutchinson, J Nilo, B MacNicol,

### Yellows:

Parramatta: David Barrett 25

Gippsland Falcons: Dean Fak 18, Andy Vargas 68, Robbie Puca

### Best Players:

3. MILE STERJOVSKI (Power)

2. David Barrett (Power)

1. Jacob Burns (Power)

Referee: Perry Mur

backs-to-the-wall effort and they never fired as well this time around, against a side they will meet four times in all this season.

The industrious John Hutchinson was forced to hook the ball clear in only the second minute to save his Falcons' side's blushes after a fluffed clearance by Mehmed Durakovic which saw Jacob Burns and Mile Sterjovski combine to lay on a pass for Joel Griffiths which the blond striker could not quite get to.

In fact, Griffiths was out of luck all night, arriving fractionally too late on numerous occasions or finding the ball played just in behind him, but it was a rare poor game from him and the rest of the team was really on fire this time.

Burns fed Steve Berry in the 4th and it needed a reflex save with his feet by keeper Bojo Jevdjovic to deny another opening.

Gippsland continued to face a barrage of shots from Power players, a defender scrambling clear in the 7th from a Berry shot after good work by David Barrett

Power took the lead in the 10th minute.

Sterjovski, who had his best game so far for his latest club, turned on a sixpence on the right hand, front edge of the box and slammed the ball low past Jevdjovic, finding the bottom left corner of the net.

A free kick, out on the right touchline, drifted in by Burns was met with a perfect glancing header by defender Joe Vrkic in the 21st to extend Parramatta's lead and within another minute Burns almost made it three when latching onto a Sterjovski pass, but his touch let him down right in front of the goal.

Gippsland's first real chance came in the 33rd when Clayton Bell hit a screamer which just cleared the bar after a poor clearance by Power had handed over possession to the visitors, briefly and they worked their way into a good scoring position.

Parramatta could again have extended their lead in the 40th after excellent work by Sterjovski, who had been been released by Walter Ardone, but Griffiths was supplied with a pass across the face of goal when a shot from the Olyroo might have been a better option and the ball went harmlessly out to safety.

Gippsland looked likely to pull one back right on half time.

Peter Kakos got to a ball first which had been pumped towards goal by a team mate from deep and after Plesa had missed the clearance Kakos lunged at the ball before stand-in keeper Mike Gibson could reach it and it needed a headed, goal-line clearance from Mark Byrnes to keep the score at 2-0 at the break.

Gippsland came out firing in the second half and forced a series of corners and free kicks, but Gibson excelled, after coming into the side for the first time this season, without any competitive matches under his belt. His handling was confident and he made a few important stops as well

Bell, Andy Vargas and Hutchinson all

had shots either saved or blocked by defenders in the opening ten minutes of the second half.

Then Parramatta got going again and went to a 3-0 lead in the 57th minute.

Sterjovski again got away down the right and dragged the ball back from the byline. It eluded Griffiths but fell nicely for Ardone who drove it low into the centre of the net from 12 yards.

Gippsland substitute Robbie Puca injected some life into the attack and had one shot headed off the line by Griffiths in the 69th and a shot by Kakos took a wicked deflection, sending Gibson the wrong way, only for the ball to cannon off the right post and then away to safety moments before.

From a Durakovic cross in the 84th another substitute, Sandy Robertson, managed to head against the same post.

Then, in the 85th, some great work by Parramatta substitute Lachlan Campbell saw his cross from the right roll all the way along the bar and when Jon Angelucci cut the ball back to the edge of the box Burns hit his shot low past the keeper to make it 4-0.

Campbell also shot just over in stoppage time and at the finish it was a very satisfying win for the home side.

Perhaps after this convincing display there will now be a bumper crowd on hand on Saturday next for the first ever derby against Northern Spirit at the same stadium.

David Mitchell said that his team had used the lay off to advantage playing a good trial game against Super League Blacktown City and working especially hard on the defence. It paid off here.

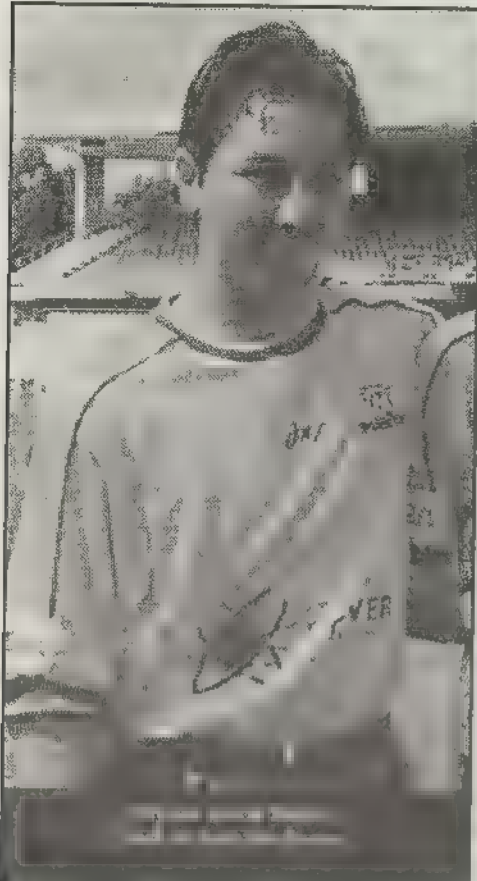
Plesa was troubled by a hamstring strain, still, but got through the game well enough, he added.

The break gave his side time to reflect on what was needed to improve performances and he hoped the crowds would now support his team after this performance. It was a good, entertaining match with both teams playing their part, with an attacking approach from the teams.

Jeff Hopkins, Mitchell's opposite number, felt that he

had erred in taking things too easily and blamed himself for the loss. Some of his players have been injured and he expects a much better effort in the return on Wednesday

Parramatta Power, on this form, would match it with anyone in the top half dozen and loom as contenders at last, given that they have games in hand, albeit tough ones away from home



By Paul Goodwin

**R**ight from the start of Saturday night's game at Parramatta Stadium it was clear that the Power side, rested for three weeks due to international commitments, were in the right mood.

Their opponents, the Gippsland Falcons, managed a creditable draw on their last visit, but even that night it was a

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# Welcome back South!



## SYDNEY OLYMPIC 6

Thomas 10, Mendez 44, Arambasic 52, Cardozo 56pen, 83, Emerton

71.

## SOUTH MELBOURNE 0

Sunday night at Belmore Sports Ground, Sydney. Crowd 8,439.



### MATCH STATS:

**SYDNEY OLYMPIC:**  
Bouhoutsos, Thomas,  
Zoricich (Sinozic 80),  
Baillie, Juric, Arambasic  
(Kalantzis 68), Cardozo,  
Emerton, Mendez, Wilson, Zorbas  
(Tome 76)

(Tome 76)



**SOUTH MELBOURNE:**  
Jones, Iosifidis, Orlie,  
Blatsis, Panopoulos  
(Alagich 76), Coveny,  
Trimboli, Curcija  
(Anastasiadis 76), Lozanovski,  
(Tsekini 76), Goutzioulis, Liparoti.

Yellow.

Olympic: Baillie 62

South Melbourne: Liparoti 88

### Best Players:

3. MENDEZ (OLYMPIC)

2. Wilson (Olympic)

1. Emerton (Olympic)

Referee: Simon Micallef

played over 600 NSL games (629 to be precise), to inflict such a defeat on the current champions indicates the quality of their performance.

In their first match back in the NSL after the World Club Championships adventure, shell-shocked South simply had no answer to Olympic's firepower.

The Lakeside outfit looked a shadow of the side that earned international respect in Brazil recently, but it would be unjust to detract from a dazzling performance by the hosts.

Olympic was far too slick and ruthless for the Oceania champions - they were unlucky not to win by an even greater margin.

South Melbourne started the match without Fausto DeAmicis or Dave Clarkson and clearly missed the steadying influence of these two veterans.

Olympic lacked Marcus Phillips and Peter Tsekis, although the return of Scott Thomas proved a real boost in the middle of the park.

The nuggety Novocastrian had the home team in front inside the opening ten minutes.

Gabriel Mendez curled the first corner of the match in to Lyndsay Wilson, who laid the ball back to the edge of the 18 yard box.

Thomas met it sweetly, giving Chris Jones no chance and bringing globetrotting South firmly back to earth.

Brett Emerton continued the good form he has lately been showing for the Olyroos, giving right-back Con Blatsis a torrid time on the flank.

The winger powered through the defence in the 12th minute and rounded the 'keeper, but Blatsis sprinted back to effect a desperate clearance under pressure from Cardozo.

South showed some sporadic flashes of promising play, mostly engineered by Paul Trimboli.

The slightly-built Soccerroo set up Michael Curcija for a shot or two early on, and then sent an angled drive just over the Olympic bar from a Goran Lozanovski corner.

On the half-hour mark, Trimboli's outswinging cross completely deceived Olympic 'keeper George Bouhoutsos.

The ball reached Curcija, who aimed a snap shot at the open goal, but Chris Zoricich somehow managed to head to safety.

An awkwardly-bouncing long ball from Mendez in the 34th minute caused havoc in the South penalty box, and drew a fabulous one-handed save from Jones.

Mendez was having probably his finest game yet for the Olympic club and, moments before the half-time break, he doubled the lead with a superb individual goal.

He received the ball about 25 yards out and dribbled casually around a trio of South Melbourne defenders before slotting home under Jones in the coolest possible fashion.



Any faint hopes of a South Melbourne revival evaporated during a ten minute spell early in the second half.

Tenacious play by Wilson and Peter Zorbas put Arambasic in the clear after 53 minutes and the former Mechelen striker beat Jones with a well-placed shot.

Straight from the re-start, Olympic continued to torment the lethargic South Melbourne backline.

Another weaving run by Mendez saw him cut down inside the box, but referee Simon Micallef rightly played the advantage and Wilson crashed a shot off the crossbar.

Seconds later, Arambasic got a boot to one of Emerton's low crosses, but this time the overworked Jones was able to scramble the ball to safety.

The Olyroo captain then fed Cardozo with a through-ball and his chipped shot floated inches wide of the far post.

The irrepressible Mendez drew a clear hand-ball from Vaughan Coveny inside the South Melbourne box after 59 minutes, and Cardozo converted the spot kick with aplomb.

At four-nil, Olympic could have been excused for easing off a little. Instead, they stepped up a gear.

Wilson nearly grabbed a well-deserved goal in the 62nd minute, but Jones did well to block his downward-angled header.

Coveny and Curcija kept Bouhoutsos awake with a couple of rare forward sorties, although neither really looked like going in.

If this were a boxing match, it would have been stopped by now. The home fans loved it, though, and there was more to come.

In the 73rd minute, Emerton crowned an outstanding match with a classy goal.

After another surging run down the right, he paused and unexpectedly

chipped the ball high over Jones and into the top corner of the net from 20 yards out.

South's coach Ange Postecoglou made a triple substitution after the 5th goal, but it had little effect upon the pattern of the game.

Norm Tome came on for the home side and helped to maintain the relentless forward momentum. His raking drive was well held by Jones in the 78th minute.

Wilson and Cardozo combined to drill the final nail into South Melbourne's coffin four minutes from time.

The gritty defender won a crunching tackle and immediately released Cardozo with a measured through-ball.

The striker held off Nick Orlie long enough to rifle home a shot at the near post.

Thanks mainly to the artistry of man-of-the-match Mendez, South Melbourne just couldn't get hold of the ball in the closing stages.

The little playmaker jinked his way to the byline in the 90th and his hooked shot was tipped just over the bar by Jones.

Sydney Olympic have staked their claim as genuine championship contenders with this victory.

They have added a merciless streak to their attacking verve, and few teams will relish a visit to Belmore for the remainder of the season.

Although much can be blamed on the after-effects of the World Club Championships, South Melbourne were made to look very ordinary in this encounter.

At least they have a chance to seek revenge when these two meet again at Lakeside tomorrow evening.



By Ben Cubby

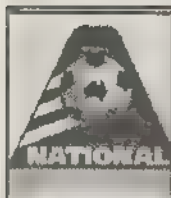
**L** league leaders Sydney Olympic inflicted a crushing 6 - 0 defeat upon visitors South Melbourne at Belmore Sportsground on Sunday evening.

Sydney Olympic's 6-0 win over was in fact their single biggest win in the league. Olympic's previous record winning margin was 5 goals, (5-0 four times, 6-1 once).

Considering that Olympic have



# Speedy Gonzales steals point for Canberra



## MELBOURNE KNIGHTS 1

Cervinski 14

## CANBERRA COSMOS 1

Gonzales 36

Sunday night at Knights Stadium, Melbourne Crowd 3,932.

### MATCH STATS:



#### MELBOURNE

**KNIGHTS:** John, Banini (Rados 83"), Vargas, Abbas, Kovacevic, Rahjer, Vukadin, Susa, Kiratzoglou, Cervinski, Kelic.



#### CANBERRA COS-

**MOS:** Konstantinou, Milin (De Jesus 45"), Popovich, Polak, Winnie, Watkins (Zwangobani 80"), Arranz, James, Kolpak (Purdue

64"), Hooker, Gonzalez

#### Yellows:

**Knights:** Abbas 71", Vargas 82"

**Canberra:** Winnie 69", Popovich 87"

#### Best Players:

**3 - CERVINSKI (KNIGHTS)**

**2 - Konstantinou (Canberra)**

**1 - Hooker (Canberra)**

**Referee:** Wayne Dade

By Mark Fisher

The Knights really should have won their lower table encounter against Canberra Cosmos on Sunday, particularly with Ivan Kelic and Adrian Cervinski both regaining some good touch up forward for their coach Vlado Vanis.

Cervinski, having last week played a full match in an attacking midfield role, looked much more comfortable as a foil for the big man Kelic. Yet he must have wondered what more he needed to do to score an elusive winner at home, particularly as the Cosmos defence lost concentration during the latter stages of the second half.

Canberra thoroughly looked the part of a struggling table-propping side, and only managed to remain in the contest through a head-turning strike by Gabriel Gonzalez, plus some desperate saves in goals by Angelo Konstantinou.

Admittedly, they were without the services of Danny Burt, whose brace against Marconi the previous week might have otherwise signalled a more attacking attitude by Canberra.

Burt's seventh yellow card of the season prior to this game meant that he



Gabby Gonzalez, the recently-married Cosmos player scored for the visitors

won't return for his side until the Round 19 clash at home against the Gippsland Falcons.

There were few other stellar players for both sides, with the exception of Rodi Vargas who swept well for the Knights, not to mention his counterpart in Robbie Hooker who put in a fairly solid game for the Cosmos at the opposite end of the park.

But it was Cervinski who in the end should have had the final say on the outcome.

He came desperately close to scoring the deadlock-breaker in the last thirty minutes of play. His late chances ranged from collecting a fortuitous long ball and then firing into the corner of the goal, through to bending a delightful free kick around a five-man wall only for Angelo Konstantinou to acrobatically parry the shot away.

Yet the best chance of all presented itself to Cervinski from the penalty spot in the 85th minute, after Alex Kiratzoglou had been unfairly brought down by Konstantinou inside the 18 yard box.

Up stepped Cervinski, and despite a well-planted shot low and to the right, Konstantinou went the correct way and denied the Knights striker yet again.

Ante Kovacevic had earlier presented Cervinski with the first real chance of the match, and he didn't miss that one.

After fourteen minutes of play, wherein Canberra were allowed a chance to stretch their legs, Kovacevic made a characteristic run through the centre of the pitch, and slipped a neat through ball to Cervinski.

The stocky striker was well positioned in between David Winnie and

Robbie Hooker at the edge of the box. Cervinski then simply edged forward of these two and fired diagonally at goal, picking out the upper right half of the open net, despite the efforts of the lunging Cosmos 'keeper.

From that moment on, predictions of a comfortable Knights win looked well founded.

At the 35th minute mark, Ransford Banini ran the ball forward down the right flank, and passed the ball inside to man-of-the-match Cervinski.

Cervinski cleverly backheeled to Kelic inside the area, yet Kelic completely squandered the chance by weakly side-footing the ball at goal, allowing Robbie Hooker to cut across the path of the on-target tap and clear away.

Before any of the crowd could catch their breath after that missed opportunity, Gabriel Gonzalez had streaked away with the ball down the left flank, leaving the Knights defence in his wake.

In he darted beyond the edge of the box and chipped with pin-point precision over the head of Martin John.

So exquisite was the shot that it flew into the roof of the net. Tom Semanni's side had got back on level terms, to make the northern scoreboard read Melbourne Knights 1 - Canberra Cosmos 1.

Few other chances came about in the last nine minutes of the half, with both teams content to wind down the clock until the break.

Ivo de Jesus was given his chance to impress from the 46th minute, and he at times looked a danger to the Knights' back three.

Both teams went about their business in a more physical way during the second half, to the effect that an otherwise miserly Wayne Dade issued four yellow cards within eighteen minutes.

The other main event to rile the partisan home crowd during the second half was Cervinski's numerous near-misses, which did little more than give the Knights fans some cause to sigh in bouts of sheer exasperation.

What the outcome of this match does is effectively kill any slender hope either team had of making the finals for season 1999-2000, and for all intensive purposes both must look towards re-building despite the uncertainties surrounding the imminent move to re-structure the National Soccer League.

Canberra Cosmos coach Tom Semanni thought his charges were quite lucky to come away with a point, after the Knights' second half exploits at goal.

On that note, he was particularly critical of his own team's efforts after the break, when the game was still there to be won.

"Really, what we said we were going to do after half time we didn't really do, which was to get the ball forward and outside their defenders", he said.

"Particularly as the game wore on, we were pinned in our own half. In the end I'd say we stole a point".

Vlado Vanis likewise was disappointed, but thought that the outcome had more to do with luck than with a lack of finishing by the Knights.

"I can't say that the players didn't try, for they had an excellent second half", he said.

He also alluded to 'pressure' he believed would mount on him if his team kept failing to claim the results that were there for the taking.

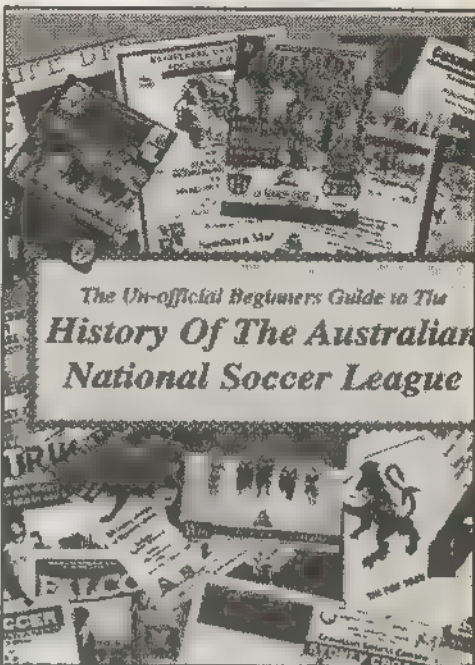
"I'm still going to work hard until the



committee makes a different decision (about the senior coaching role)", he said. "I do believe that I am doing a good job, and I still think we can finish the season in the middle of the table", said Vanis.

**Knights news ...** Perhaps the biggest statement to be made by the Knights coach though was that he expected veteran English great Peter Beardsley to make a guest appearance for the Knights for their Round 24 clash at home against South Melbourne.

That will no doubt be a match for all and sundry to look out for.



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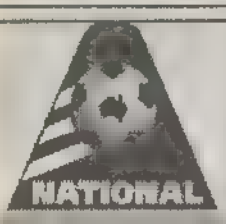
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# The Wolves juggernaut shows no sign of slowing



## WOLLONGONG WOLVES 1 SYDNEY UNITED 0

Petrovski 8

Sunday night at Brandon Park, Sydney. Crowd 5,824.

### MATCH STATS:



#### WOLLONGONG

**WOLVES:** Pogliacomì, Souris, Ceccoli (Harlock 88), Stanton, Cervinski, Horsley, Spencer (Surjan 68), Young (Huxley 68), Chipperfield, Petrovski, Masi.



#### SYDNEY UNITED:

Hughes, Younis (Moric 45), Bosnar, Savoca, Jurilj, Jerman (Boskeski 70), Pondeljak, Maric, Rastali, Usljebrka, Palapanis (Bozinovski 80).

#### Yellow Cards:

**Wolves:** Souris 27, Ceccoli 41.  
**United:** Jerman 29, Moric 55

#### BEST PLAYERS:

3. DAVID CERVINSKI (WOLVES)
2. Robbie Stanton (Wolves)
1. Mario Jerman (United)

Referee: Con Diomis

By Nathan Simpson

**W**ollongong Wolves striker Saso Petrovski overcame a niggling ankle injury to score his ninth goal of the season and hand his side a well-deserved 1-0 win over Sydney United at Brandon Park.

The 24-year-old scored the match-winner in the seventh minute with a well-timed header from six-yards past goalkeeper Brett Hughes.

But Petrovski admitted after the game he almost didn't make it onto the field against United.

"I received a knock to the ankle at training during the week and it has been quite sore... but I'm happy I played tonight and got the goal," he said.

"I've pulled up a bit sore but it's nothing serious, just one of those knocks you get now and then."



Petrovski's goal was a gem. It started when wing-back Alvin Ceccoli made a good run down the right flank, cut inside two defenders and floated an inch-perfect cross onto the head of Wollongong's leading marksman.

The goal also kept Petrovski, who hadn't scored in his previous two outings, among the leading scorers in the National League.

The home team had the better of the play throughout the game and were rarely threatened but United's attack, led by Wollongong-based Zvonko Usljebrka and former Wolf Mario Jerman.

Wollongong had two more good chances to score in the first half, following Petrovski's early goal.

The first came in the 14th minute when striker Esala Masi hit the post from six yards after a well-timed cross from Petrovski.

The second, an even easier chance, fell to Ceccoli, but he blasted over from six yards after a pin-point angled pass from midfielder Noel Spencer.

United also had a handful of chances in the first half with Mario Jerman the main culprit for not scoring in the 35th minute.

Midfielder Mirko Jurilj did the lead up work and his defence-splitting pass found Jerman in a one-on-one situation with Wollongong goalkeeper Les Pogliacomì.

Jerman attempted to place the ball past Pogliacomì from the edge of the box, but the goalkeeper pulled off a brilliant save.

In fact, Pogliacomì was called upon throughout the game to foil United's long ball game from corners and general play.

He is also keeping Daniel Beltrame, who started the season with the number one shirt, out of the Wollongong team.

United started the second half with the wind behind them and by replacing Ray Younis for Joe Moric.

The move changed things a little for United and when Usljebrka turned defender David Cervinski inside the box and blasted at Pogliacomì, who in turn tipped over the bar, there seemed to be an air of confidence about the visitors. Unfortunately for them, that's where the chances ended.

Both substitute David Huxley and Antony Surjan had good chances to put the issue beyond doubt for Wollongong but the 1-0 result was good enough in the end.

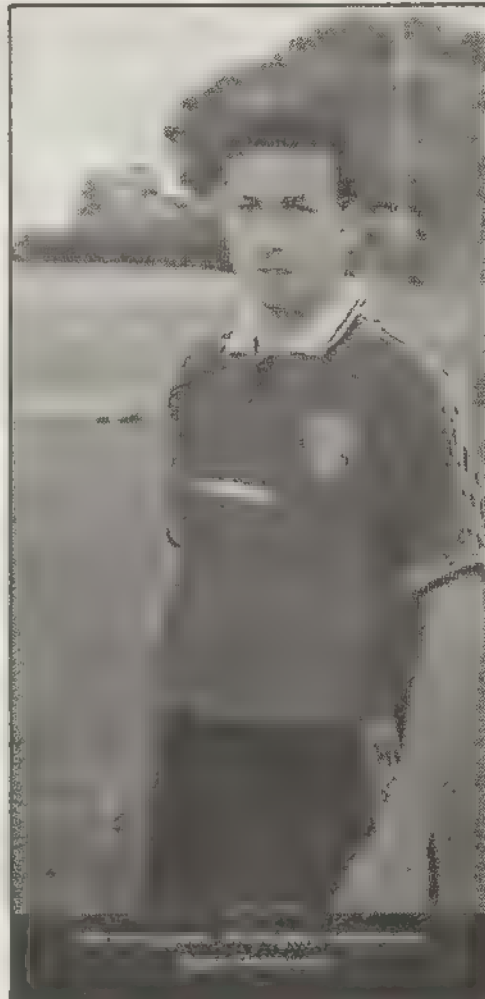
A delighted Nick Theodorakopoulos said after the game his side deserved the three points and that a top two finish was his side's main objective.

"We had the territorial advantage throughout and I made a point during the week that we would look to not conceding a goal against Sydney United tonight," he said.

"I thought David Cervinski and George Souris were standouts at the back while Les Pogliacomì looked comfortable in goal.

"Scott Chipperfield played well despite the fact he had been sick for most of the week while Esala Masi had just returned home following the death of his father last weekend.

"We're playing well but are taking one thing at a time. I also have good quality on the bench, which will come in handy during the second half of the season and we have a few players heading for sus-



pensions with yellow cards.

"That win also put us in clear second position... that'll do wonders for the confidence."

A clearly dejected Sydney United coach David Ratcliffe said he expected better from some of his players and put the defeat down to poor crossing and untidiness.

"We had a couple of decent players missing and we do play better at home," he said.

"We were untidy in the first 15 minutes but slowly settled down, but we didn't take our chances."

Ratcliffe, returning to the club where he played and coached for eight years also had this to say about the Wollongong fans: "It seems everyone in the grandstand is an expert!" The game attracted 5842 spectators.

By Nathan Simpson

**F**ijian international Esala Masi had a special incentive to beat Sydney United at Brandon Park.

He slotted straight into the Wollongong team just 24 hours after returning home from Fiji, where he attended his father's funeral mid-week.

It had been a stressful week for the man they call Tiger, but his return was a timely boost for Wollongong.

Masi has scored eight goals this season and was one of Wollongong's best against United.

He never gave the opposition an inch and ran all

afternoon. He was outstanding in such difficult circumstances.

"I wasn't 100 percent but I thought went a right tonight," Masi said. "I knew I had to be strong for me and for the team."

"It's been hard, it's been a hard week, but I wanted to play tonight."

"I always planned on returning home on the weekend so I could play on Sunday. It's something I wanted to do."

Masi, who has become a cult figure in his hometown of Ba in Fiji, also sends regular newspaper articles home for his town to read.

He is also seen regular-

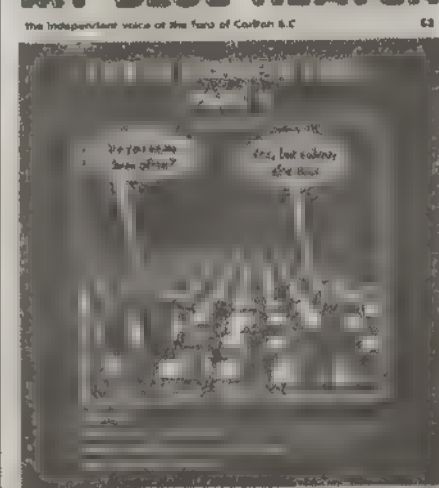
ly on television playing for Wollongong in Fiji.

But he had an unexpected return trip home last Monday morning when his father passed away on Sunday night, just a couple of hours after he scored a goal in his side's 3-2 home win over Carlton.

Wollongong coach Nick Theodorakopoulos said he was always going to start Masi. "Esala was keen to be involved because his dad would have wanted it that way."



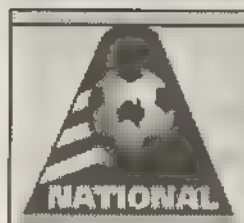
## MY BLUE HEAVEN



The Carlton Fanzone



# Trajanovski goal keeps Marconi on track



## BRISBANE STRIKERS 0

## MARCONI STALLIONS 1

Trajanovski 37'

Saturday night at Suncorp Metway Stadium, Brisbane. Crowd 3,900

### MATCH STATS:



**STRIKERS:** 1. Bolton, 2. Gwynne, 5. Bell, 6. Ditton, 8. Pilic, 9. Foster (15. Battistin 45'), 10. Srhoj, 12. Dwyer (19. Baldwin 78'), 13. McLaren, 16. Grierson, 18. Meredith (11. Hews 72')



**MARCONI:** 1. Turnbull, 2. Gibson, 3. M Babic, 5. Longo, 7. Care (23. Zoric 78'), 8. McDonald, 11. Smith, 13. Invincible, 14. Farah, 18. Duric, 22. Trajanovski (19. Renaud 82'). Sub not used: 18 Karl

### Yellow Cards:

Strikers: Brad Ditton 85'

### BEST PLAYERS:

- 1 - CHAD GIBSON (MARCONI)
- 2 - Brad Ditton (Brisbane)
- 3 - Glenn Gwynne (Brisbane)

Referee: Gerry Connolly

which showed no sign of letting up during the game.

As the players walked onto the playing field, they were welcomed by sauna-like conditions that clearly affected the standard of play.

Both sides gave uninspiring, lethargic displays which would have left many of the 3900 supporters wondering why they didn't spend their evenings relaxing beside a swimming pool.

It took 12 minutes of uneventful play before the Strikers first threatened the Marconi goal. Nick Meredith fired in a trademark cross which found the head of leading goalscorer Paul Foster, who could only head the ball over the bar.

Brisbane had a penalty appeal turned down five minutes later when it appeared the ball was handled in the area, but referee Gerry Connolly quite rightly waived the protests, judging the handball to be accidental.

Brisbane soccer legend Frank Farina was in the stands in his role as Socceroo coach, and Strikers keeper Clint Bolton was keen to show his inclusion in the Australian squad to Chile was justified.

He pulled off a great save twenty minutes into the game to deny Chad Gibson a goal from a free kick outside the area. At full stretch, he was able to tip the shot over the crossbar.

Kris Trajanovski beat Bolton in the 37th minute, but it was former teammate Danny Invincible who set the goal up for the former Socceroo.

Invincible, who followed Farina to Marconi two seasons ago, sent in an inch-perfect cross from the right sideline. Trajanovski out-jumped Strikers captain Stuart McLaren to head the ball past Bolton.

The score remained unchanged at half time, when Strikers coach John Kosmina replaced Paul Foster, who picked up a foot injury, with utility Mark Battistin.

In a tactical switch, McLaren went up front and Battistin in turn took his place in the defence.

The second half was a tale of missed opportunities for the Strikers.

David Pilic did well evading a number of defenders in the Marconi box, but in the end his weak shot did not trouble Stallions keeper Michael Turnbull.

Peter Dwyer also had a good chance just past the hour mark, but he was unable to get on the end of Peter Grierson's cross.

Grierson himself had three good chances to earn a point, but none of his efforts greatly troubled the Marconi defence.

For their part, Marconi only had one noteworthy attacking raid in the half, but Gibson found Brisbane defender Glenn

Gwynne in fine form to deny his cross.

The game gradually fizzled out, as the players became lethargic in the sub-tropical heat.

Kosmina refused to blame the oppressive heat for his team's poor performance.

"We've been living in these conditions for a week, and it's the same for both teams," he said.

"It wasn't the heat that let us down. We did enough in the second half to win the game."

Marconi counterpart Eddie Kmcevic said heat would always be a problem in Australia with summer soccer.

"It was very warm out there - you could see a lot of the players were walking," he said.

"I'm not a great fan of summer soccer, but in this country it's the only way we can get the publicity without competing with other codes."

He said gaining three points in such conditions was never going to be an easy task.

"It's never easy coming up to Brisbane and taking something away from them, especially in these difficult conditions," he said.

"Brisbane's a very good team this year, and the way they've gelled together means they're a hard team to break down."

The win has Marconi knocking on the door of the top-six.

"It was an important win for us, especially after the horrible result on Sunday against Canberra," said Kmcevic.

"I thought we played well in the first half, and in the second half we defended and the pressure was on, but the boys did the job."

Kosmina said he thought the Strikers could have won the game.

"We got into some good positions and certainly didn't make the most of them," he said.

"We probably could have (won the match) in the end, but the fact is we didn't do enough in the first half. Their goal came from a ball which should not have been allowed to be chipped in, and in the end it was a good header."

The Strikers again play Marconi on Wednesday in Sydney, followed by a home game against the Kingz next Saturday. Kosmina dismissed suggestions this was simply too much for the players to cope with.

"Blokes like to put their hands up and say they're professional footballers," he said.

"If they can't play three games in a week at this stage of the year at this level, then they've got to say they're part-timers and maybe the National League is too hard for them."

Kosmina will have Jade North and Jeromy Harris returning from suspension for Wednesday's game.

"I think we missed Jade (North) tonight, especially in the first half," he said.

"So it will be good to have him back."

For his part, Kmcevic will be able to call upon the services of skipper Brad Maloney and striker Sean Babic, which will hopefully provide the Marconi faithful with a better match than witnessed at the



old Lang Park.

Home supporters still had something to cheer about after chairman Tony Petty's announcement that the Strikers will remain in Brisbane - for the rest of this season at least.

However, that did not stop the "Banana Army" voicing their opposition to the proposed Carrara move in song throughout the match.



By Cameron Atfield

**M**arconi's top-six aspirations received a significant boost when they defeated the Brisbane Strikers at a sweltering Suncorp Metway Stadium on Saturday night.

The week saw South East Queensland endure a record heatwave

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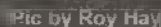
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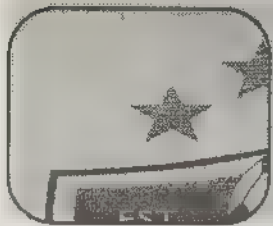
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Akwasi Agyei found the net for the visitors but Lucas and his team-mates fought back in the second-half. Lucas struck in the 57th minute and then grabbed the glory when he netted again after 72 minutes.





# The short fat kid stands tall in Brazil's Maracana



By Aidan Ormond

**B**y Chris Jones' own admission, in his junior days in Melbourne with Karingal United he was the "short fat kid with the Michelin legs who was told to play in goals. I couldn't run!" he said.

As luck would have it for Jones' current NSL club South Melbourne, the young keeper actually preferred playing in goals, according to his then-manager Alex Ormond.

"While most kids just loved to play outfield, Chris actually seemed to enjoy being keeper ... it seemed it was the only position he wanted to play," said Ormond.

Later in his career, luck would also play a part. Turning out in a friendly for state league club Oakleigh (where fortuitously he had just been loaned), against South Melbourne, Jones did enough to impress coach Ange Postecoglou, and a spot in Australia's most celebrated squad of the late nineties was his.

And after a couple of seasons playing second fiddle to first Soccerroo Michael Petkovic then this season Hungarian import Milan Udvaracz, Jones got his

opportunity when Udvaracz was red-carded for allegedly spitting (an allegation the Hungarian denies.)

Jones did enough again to warrant Postecoglou's faith, and again, as luck would have it, it was just before the World Club Championship, a tournament being held for the first time and during South's rein as Australian champions.

As we know Jones did not disappoint in Brazil and now he is sifting through offers for possible moves next season to European glamour leagues.

Yes, he has worked hard for his success (he works full-time at Avco as well) but fate and luck have been kind to the likeable 24-year-old from Langwarrin (despite unsuccessful trials in the UK; his parents Dick and Barbara are from Liverpool). Certainly the Maracana Stadium is a long way from the vast windy expanses of Karingal United's home ground at Ballam Park in suburban Frankston.

"Well only six weeks ago I was playing youth team, but yes it certainly is a big step from there to Brazil's Maracana, having police escorts everywhere you go and fans coming up to you wishing you well,"

he said after arriving back to the relative anonymity of Melbourne.

"The first game against Vasco was unbelievable, especially when they played their national anthem in front of 70,000.

"Yeah it's just luck I guess, because it would have been a hard decision for Ange. I have to thank him for having the confidence in me.

"I think we felt we could have done better at the end of our games. Having said that the defensive display - particularly in the first game against Vasco - was just awesome. The amount of times guys like Nick Orlic or 'Lippa' (Rob Liparoti) got their bodies in the way of shots."

Jones may also have been given the seal of approval by the infamous duo of Brazilian soccer - Romano and Edmundo ('The Animal').

"Romario winked at me so I winked back at him. I don't know what it meant though! And Edmundo tapped me on my head after he missed a goal.

"The tournament was very good, particularly with two Brazil teams in it. I hope they have more of these championships.

"The Manchester United game was a very hot day, so if you bust a gut you would have been dead in five minutes, but I still feel they were taking it a little easy.

"Against Necaxa it was unusual to have three penalties against us, and Con Blatsis is as honest as they come, and he said one did not hit him on the arm.

"I lost three kilos in the Vasco game and the players on the field would have lost even more, so I think playing the Necaxa game 48 hrs after Vasco made it so much more difficult for us."

And now the whole tournament is out of the way, Jones is adamant the rest of the season will see South bury the demons of the first half of the league, and forge ahead to the finals.

"Even though we weren't saying it, it was understandable that South may have been preoccupied with thought of playing in Brazil and clubs like the Red Devils of Manchester United," concluded Jones.

Sadly, last Sunday's 6-0 demolition by Olympic of South only serves to show

how difficult it will be to get back to the finals this season.

Karingal United were also nicknamed the Red Devils. Was that an omen for the short fat kid in goals all those years ago?

**Chris Jones:**

**Clubs:** Karingal juniors/seniors, Springvale City, England for trials, Bentleigh Greens, loaned to Oakleigh, South Melbourne.

**Height:** 188cm

**Weight:** 88k

**In South news ... Ange Postecoglou** signed former Carlton striker Andy Vlahos (below) once it became evident the player was eager to return to Australia with South Melbourne.

"Obviously we're very pleased to add another quality player to our impressive squad," Postecoglou said on South's net



site

"He has enjoyed two good years in Australia and now he's got European experience with Panathinaikos also. We're very happy to have him here."

Postecoglou has conceded it is unlikely that his new signing will play until tomorrow (Wed.) when Sydney Olympic visit South for their first game since the WCC, where he is expected to assume a left-sided midfield role.

"Andy should play in the home game against Olympic. He's a disciplined player with a good attitude and strong playing attributes, and will add depth to our midfield," Postecoglou said.

## Australia Day Honours: Farina selects NSL stars for Chile tour

**I**n the next few days Soccerroo coach Frank Farina is tipped to announce his national squad for the February

Chile tour. Expect NSL stars Pablo Cardozo (right) from Sydney Olympic, Wolves' Scott Chipperfield (below), Clint Bolton from the Strikers and Glory's Olyroo Kasey Wehrman to be called up.

Inspirational Olyroo Hayden Foxe is another that will be putting on the green and gold against Chile, Bulgana and Slovakia.

And there is more good news with Mark Schwarzer -

Middlesbrough's inform keeper - making himself available for this tour

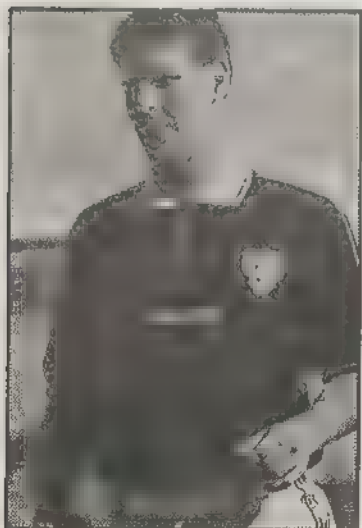
(expect him to be the number one keeper on this trip.)

J-league-experienced defenders Tony Popovic and Power's new signing Steve Laybutt should also be in the squad to be announced probably on Thursday.

The naming of the squad has been delayed due to some European clubs and their tardiness in getting back to Soccer Australia regarding the release of players.

Joe Simunic - who has given a commitment to Farina that he does want to play for Australia - is now doubtful given his transfer to Hertha Berlin. The player may want to stay in Germany as a result.

Other players who are possible inclusions include Stan Lazaridis, Glasgow Rangers duo Moore and Vidmar, Mark Viduka and Sydney Olympic's Brett Emerton.



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# Stange says Ergic set for world stardom

**G**lory coach Bernd Stange has paid young midfielder Ivan Ergic the ultimate compliment. He says he can't teach the 18-year-old a thing!

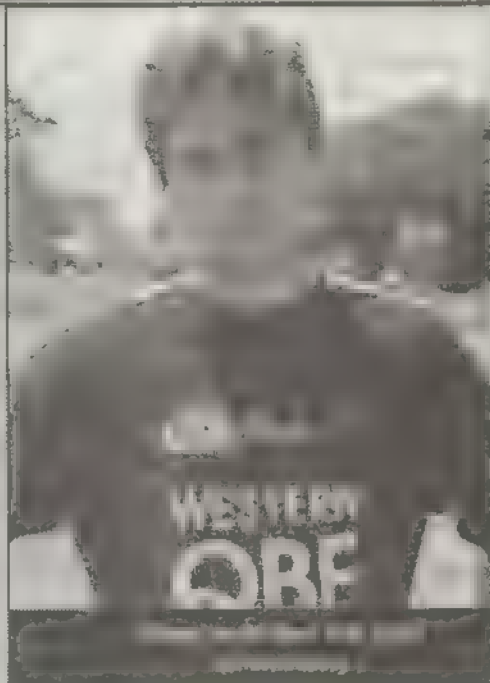
"He's already scored eight goals in 15 games from midfield and he's a sensation in 25 years of coaching at the highest level in Germany only Ulf Kirsten (Bayer Leverkusen) and Matthias Sammer (ex-Borussia Dortmund) have been this good. I can't teach him anything! He's very, very exciting."

Ironically, Ulf Kirsten is a possible Glory player for next season.

"Believe me, I'm sure he will be gone from here in the next few months," added Stange.

All the agents are here already and soon our stands will be filled with coaches from half of Europe's biggest clubs," said Stange to net site Football 365

A big wrap indeed, but of some of



"But we had no chance of keeping him because the salaries are very low here and it's a big opportunity for him. But maybe it's come too early."

"But my other keeper Jason Petkovic, is much better than Milosevic. He is 26 though, and Leeds wanted Danny. It's good business for Leeds to get Milosevic for such a small fee. But that's not my department!"

Leeds' signing of Hay also surprised Stange, the former East Germany national coach who is himself the subject of some transfer speculation (see page two). The 24-year-old centre-back cost the Yorkshire outfit £200,000, with a further £100,000 to come Perth's way when he has played 60 first-team games. Or rather, if he does, as he is yet to make his debut.

"I tried to send Hay to Stuttgart but Leeds came in," said Stange.

"I think he needs longer too, he needs to adapt to English football, which is very aggressive."

"He is tall and quick and strong in the air but he needs much more aggression. I'm not sure he'll make it."

Glory has also signed Ljubo Milicevic, a tough defender from the AIS. Will he be as good as Ergic? Will Ergic be called up by Raul Blanco?

After such a wrap, surely the Olympic coach would be thinking about him for the next Olympic tour to be held in March in Europe, against a top nation we are told.



his departed players, he was less lavish, particularly Olyroo Danny Milosevic and Kiwi Danny Hay.

"Milosevic is a very young man with a big future. He is tall, with good reactions and is a nice character. He will become a good leader too. But he should have waited longer - he'd have been better off being first-choice goalkeeper here than being second or third choice at Leeds

## Readers' forum

**S**hame, Futsal Australia, shame. At a time when we should be teaching our children morals, the importance of fair play and, in sport, to accept the referee's decision, over the weekend (15/1) we saw perhaps one of the worst decisions ever made and a decision that will have ramifications for Indoor Soccer in this country.

At the national futsal indoor titles held at the AIS in Canberra, in a semi-final of the U/10s competition, a Sydney-based team, which was undefeated for the whole tournament won a penalty shootout (yes, the dreaded penalty shootout which is traumatic enough for adults let alone children) fairly and squarely.

However a frivolous protest from the opposition Canberra team was lodged and following a period of two hours the appeals committee conveyed their decision that the penalty shootout was to be retaken.

The decision was despite the match referees setting the rules of the shootout at the time, which were followed by both teams precisely.

It is also worth noting that a parent from the Canberra team physically assaulted the referee following the shootout. A fine example for our impressionable children.

Just when Futsal Australia could step in and make an example of what had happened, their appeals committee favors the Canberra side and, by this, apparently condones the violent behaviour we witnessed. They also, by their decision, sent out the message that the decision of the referee is not necessarily final, despite all other things being equal and fair.

For the record, the parents of the Sydney-based team refused to subject their children to the retaking of the penalty shootout in the circumstances and went home leaving the Canberra team to play the final.

Understandably, the Sydney chil-

dren were distraught with what had happened but their parents took the sensible decision and considered the well-being of the children of both teams.

Despite all the negativity about the penalty shootout, Futsal Australia chose it as a first resort despite requests for the game to be replayed on a 'Golden Goal' basis, instead of a penalty shootout.

What message can be interpreted from what happened?

- The referee's decision is not final  
- If you don't agree with the ref's decision, condone violent behaviour and assault, you may yet win a game.

What a disgrace and with decisions like that no wonder Soccer in this country runs a very sad fourth to other codes - we are losing sight of what sport really means. Shame.

Giovanni Crocco and  
John Petralito,  
Concord, NSW

We have passed on your letter to Futsal Australia and we await their comments.

**H**i my name is Michael Barber, and being an avid reader of your soccer newspaper, it is good to finally see a paper dealing with the local game, so congratulations on a top effort.

I do have one question however, which is that I have been trying to get the matildas calendar and for the love of God I can't find it anywhere, being in a country town it is hard to get these sort of things, but hopefully with your help I can find out where I can get one.

Keep up the good work with your excellent newspaper and I wish you success in the future

Mick Barber  
E-mail.

You can contact the AWSA on 02 62817999 and they should be able to help locate one for you. Also, IS hopes to have a Matildas calendar promotion coming up soon, where a reader can win a copy.

## WIN A FREE SOCCER CD BY LUST IN SPACE

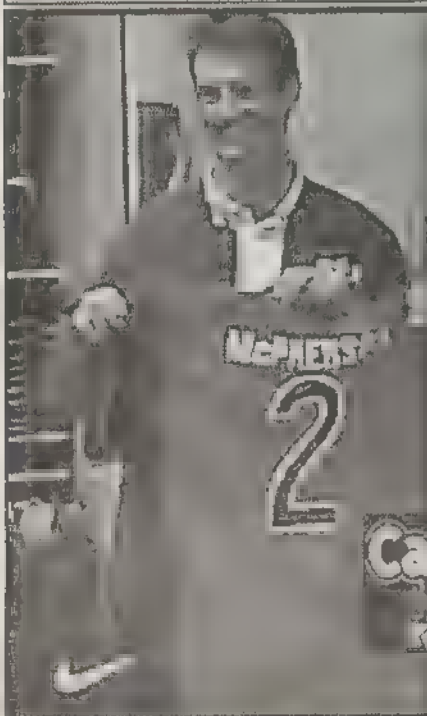
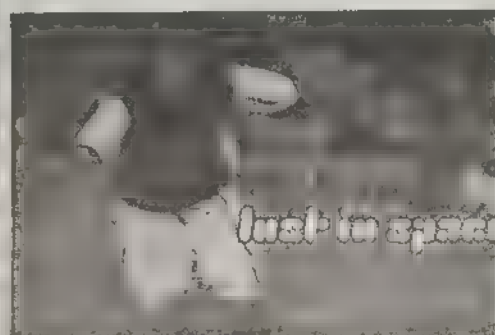
This fantastic CD by the band Lust in Space is out now and it has already received airplay on Melbourne and national radio. The Carlton track is called 'A Dream Won't Do' and it has a brilliant Oasis sound to it. For your chance to win this CD cut out and send this ad to Inside Soccer at PO BOX 3889 PARRAMATTA NSW 2124. You can enter as many times as you like, the more entries the more chance you have of winning (photocopies not accepted). The first correct answer drawn on January 31, 2000 will win: winner announced in the Feb 1 issue.

QUESTION: WHICH CARLTON PLAYER WAS ONCE A TEAMMATE WITH RONALDO?

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

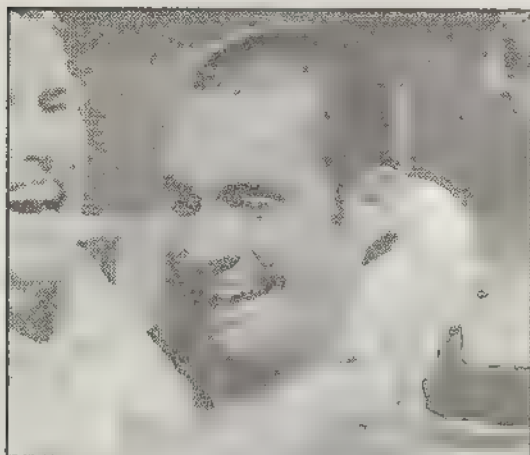
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# The Four Diegos

## with ace Brissy striker Paul Foster



**O**n Guest of the Week we have a goal-scoring member of the surprise packet of the NSL this season, Brisbane Strikers.

His 11 goals and incisive finishing have been one of the major factors behind the Strikers' success and push for national league glory this season.

Please a big Four Diegos and IS wel-

your speeding tickets now that you are a star? What benefits have come your way since you started scoring bags of goals?"

Foster: "It's all wine, women and song up here! I now don't train that often - I'm always down the pub. Seriously though, nothing has really changed. As far as the police go, we've got one in our team so I guess I've got an immediate advantage whether I score goals or not.

Brisbane is a great place and a good time is had by all when we go out socially."

Diegos: "People like to label strikers. Descriptions like - buffet-ing target man, nancy-boy goal poacher or lazy, good-for-nothing, useless slob - are quite commonly used.

How would describe yourself as a striker?"

Foster: "Geez Diegos, that's a tough one. You've really stumped me on that. That's certainly not a question that I've ever considered. People warned me about the Diegos' 'Hard Questions' and now I know exactly what they mean. I guess I just go out there and try to do my best and be as unselfish as possible."

Diegos: "Brisbane Strikers coach John Kosmina possesses an intimidating reputation. Some say he's so scary that he makes the 'Blair Witch Project' look more like a Humphrey B Bear stroll through the Botanical Gardens.

What's he like as a coach and being a former legendary Socceroo striker, does he like to pull you aside and tell you how it's done?"

Foster: "He does give me pointers and watches closely what I'm doing. 'Kossie' is only an intimidating guy if you're playing against him. He is actually a great bloke and his reputation in my opinion, doesn't do him justice.

He is very intelligent and very 'switched on' as a coach and I think that would surprise a lot of people."

Diegos: "One of your former clubs South Melbourne has recently competed in

the World Club Championships in Brazil. Although losing all three games they performed admirably, not losing by more than two goals to any team.

Earlier in the season though, Brisbane shellacked the Lakesiders 5-1 with you notching a hat trick.

If you apply a bit Diego mathematical genius, does this then mean that the Strikers would've won the tournament in

Brazil in they participated and that you are in fact, a better player than Romario, Edmundo and Andy Cole, who could not score against South?"

Foster: "I think it was unfortunate for South Melbourne because they haven't really shown a lot of form this season. If they had have taken some of last season's form over to Rio they may have done even better. Having said that they performed really well."

Diegos: "From a NSL player's point of view what effect did South Melbourne's performance have on you and in your opinion, how can the NSL clubs capitalise on the fact that we now know that Australian clubs can compete with any club side in the world?"

Foster: "I think from a player's point of view we've now got something extra to look forward to. If you can manage to win the league you now have an incentive to go and play against some of the best clubs in the world.

That's fantastic from the player's viewpoint. As for capitalising on those types of things, all you can do is try to get as much of this achievement into the mainstream media as possible.

Hopefully then Channel 7, which holds the rights to Aussie soccer, might deem it attractive to air our NSL games on commercial TV."

Diegos: "Your brother Craig really came of age as a player under Terry Venables for the Socceroos, earning an overseas deal with Portsmouth and now Crystal Palace at a relatively late stage in his career.

Do you still harbour a desire to play for the Socceroos and do you ever get on the phone to Terry with the view of getting a lucrative deal over in Britain?"

Foster: "I haven't spoken to Terry



since the evening of the tragic Iran game in 1997. I've just turned 32 years of age and had a look at John Kosmina's record where he played his last game for Australia at 32, so I think it would be a little optimistic of me to hope to make a debut this late in my career.

The form is certainly alright but the age is perhaps counting against me."

Diegos: "Thanks Paul. You can join the Diegos four-pronged attack anytime. Adios amigo!"

Foster: "Thanks for the offer Diegos but I don't think 'Kossie' would be too happy if I crossed over to the Diego's camp. I don't want to relive the Blair Witch Project everyday for the rest of my life if you know what I mean. Adios amigos!"

come to this season's NSL leading goalscorer - Brisbane Strikers' Paul Foster

Diegos: "Congratulations on your goal-scoring form at present. In recent years we've been used to the likes of Pablo Cardozo or Damian Mori leading the domestic goal-scoring charts but this season it's different, you've come out of nowhere and seem to be scoring goals for fun.

Are you surprised at your rich vein of scoring form?"

Foster: "I always felt that when I came back that I'd score a few. Certainly the run at the beginning of the season when everyone had written us off but we confounded them by being unbeaten for 9 games, was a bit of a surprise. So things from a team point of view have gone better than expected and obviously we're pretty happy about that."

Diegos: "Being part of the Diegos infamous four-pronged attack, we know that being a glamour-boy striker brings with it certain hedonistic and other benefits.

How are you doing at the Gold Coast nightclubs these days? Do police rip up

"It's all wine, women and song up here! I now don't train that often - I'm always down the pub. Seriously though, nothing has really changed."



### Stereo 974 FM in Melbourne

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"Compulsory listening for Melbourne's sports public," says Inside Soccer's Aidan Ormond



# Kickoff 2000 excels

Junior development in the Newcastle area has taken a huge step forward with the organisation of Excel Soccer's "Kickoff 2000" camp last week. Excel Soccer Inc. is the brainchild of former Newcastle national league coach Jim Foley and local businessman Phil Russell.

Their aim is to improve the level of junior football in Newcastle by creating high intensity programs through the utilisation of high quality coaches, and using the fabulous facilities at the University of Newcastle.

One such program is Kickoff 2000 - a complete camp that has a live-on-campus component for half its athletes. Kickoff 2000 is supported by the University of Newcastle Soccer Club and the University of Newcastle Sports Union, and has secured national/international sponsors such as Pepsi, Admiral, and Impulse Airlines.

Kickoff 2000 has attracted high profile coaches such as former Scottish international and champions medals winner with Celtic Willie Wallace, English FA accredited coach Len McKendry, John Gardiner, John McKie, Eddie Reeve, Ossie Bellamy, and speed and fitness conditioning expert Dennis Pitt.

Camp director Jim Foley has an unbridled belief in what Excel Soccer can do to junior development in the Hunter area.

"Excel Soccer was born from our belief that juniors have to spend more quality time in quality practice", Foley told Inside Soccer.

"Many players are fortunate to have quality training at their club, but there are many that need to have their club training supplemented by what we are doing.

"Hopefully we are able to provide more young players more opportunities to improve their game."

Foley believed that there was a need in Newcastle for such a program, particularly with the quality of player that can be produced in the area.

"Newcastle has long been recognised as a big nursery for the game in Australia. I don't believe we have reached a saturation point for what we are doing for players in Australia.

"We're at a facility in Australia here at the University of Newcastle that is first class. First of all the players come into this tremendous environment backed by having the experience we have with the coaching staff.

"Then we emphasise the total approach to training, why they are here - to learn and improve and reach the goals they have set for themselves. Hopefully this week presents the opportunity to embrace all those things for their further development."

Willie Wallace has nothing but praise for organisation of the camp in its first year.

"The camp was excellent. The facilities, the grounds, the organisation - everything is great. Most of the camps I have been through the University of New England but this is as good, if not better."

Wallace feels that the players, aged between 12 and 16 will benefit greatly from the week.

"It gives the kids encouragement to train harder in the game. Our current system has young players only training a few hours a week - it doesn't happen that way.

"You have to be like swimmers, cricketers, you name it, you have to put more into the game to succeed. Soccer players have to do the same."

From the University of Newcastle Sports Union Chris Tola welcomes Excel Soccer to the university. "I think by having a camp such as this on campus we are profiling the excellent facilities here which I believe is one of the best in Australia. Our ultimate goal with this is to rival and better the University of New England camp."

For more information on how you can be involved with Excel Soccer phone Jim Foley on 0418 423 192.

# Arise Sir Frank!

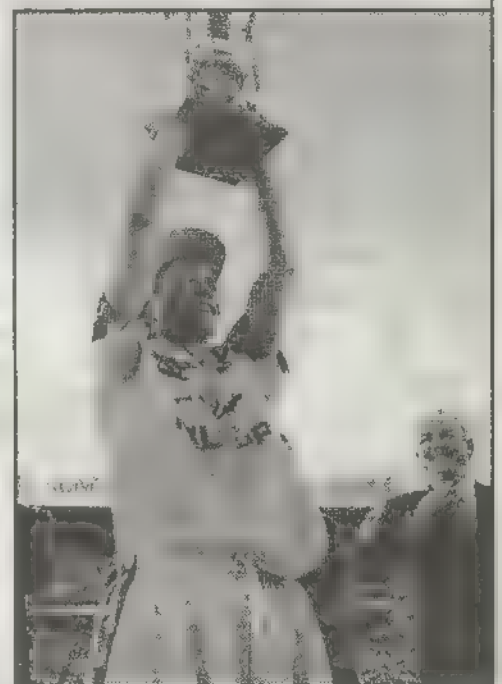
Well almost! Tomorrow new Socceroo coach Frank Farina will be awarded an OAM in the Australia Day honours list. It is for "services to soccer as a player and coach".

He was nominated after the Strikers' Grand Final victory in 1997, but his nomination also noted his significant achievements as a player and the fact that he was really the first of the successful overseas Australian players to come back and put something into the game while he was still young enough (31) to make a decent contribution.

The Award - an OAM - is a recognition by, and a thank you from, the Australian community that he has made a level of contribution "above and beyond" the call of duty, so to speak.

OAM stands for Medal of the Order of Australia. People generally get one for charity work, community work and services to sport. (There's also another category for public servants, fire officers, police officers etc).

Other sports people to have an



OAM include Allan Border, Mark Taylor, Mick Doohan, John Newcombe, Kieren Perkins and former soccer referee and Inside Soccer writer Donald Campbell - to name a few

# Big Bob's 300

By Aidan Ormond

Big Bob Catlin may not have an OAM (yet!) but he does have a Hill at Breakers Stadium named after him and he has just played game number 300 in the NSL.

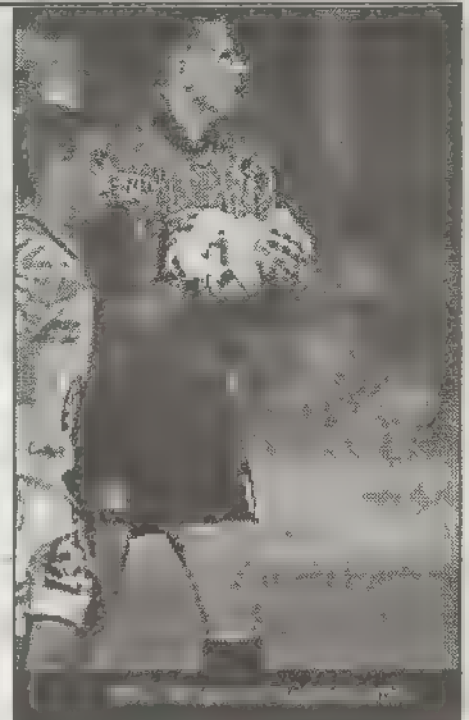
He has now equalled Jeff Oliver's record. Catlin has played 43 times for his current club Newcastle Breakers and is one of the reasons for Newcastle's surge to the finals this season.

I vividly remember playing against 'Big Bob' back in 1981 in the Australian Schoolboys Championships at Elwood in Victoria.

He was huge back then and of course it was no use trying to intimidate him.

He was a rock behind the NSW side that featured little midfield dynamo Gary Phillips, even though Victoria went on to win the tournament.

Congratulations Bob from IS,



here's hoping you reach 350.

# Fiji tour for schoolboys

The Australian Schoolboys "A" team was defeated by a full strength Fiji Under/20 team 3-2 in a rugged encounter at Nadi's Prince Charles Park last weekend.

Goals were scored by Matthew Low and Nick Budin in a sometimes spiteful and physical match which saw a number of the Australians replaced with injuries - none of which were serious but may have ruled them out of yesterday's match against the same team.

This was the second match of the four-match tour which ends on

Wednesday (tomorrow).

The first match ended in a 1-1 draw with the Australian goal scored by Orhan Dincer in the first half.

Media Liaison Officer Richard Beazley said: "The lads are finding it difficult in the 30+ heat and tired in both matches mid-way through the second half. However they continued to play well under the conditions.

"The team is now based in Suva for the next few days with matches scheduled against Fiji U/20s."

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## BRIDGES SCORES WINNER AGAINST OLD CLUB

**S**underland old boy Michael Bridges came back to haunt his former club as he fired Leeds to a 2-1 victory in the top-of-the-table showdown at the Stadium of Light.

Bridges struck six minutes after the break to add to Jason Wilcox's stunning 24th-minute opener - his first for the club - and it looked like the Premiership leaders were coasting.

But a mistake by Jonathan Woodgate allowed Kevin Phillips to pull one back within a minute with his 20th of the season to set up a tense finish.

The Yorkshiremen extended their lead over Manchester United to four points after successive league defeats by Arsenal and Aston Villa, but they were made to fight all the way by a Sunderland side looking for their first win of the year.

The Weariders lacked a cutting edge in the absence of the suspended Niall Quinn, but battled manfully to force their way back into a game which rapidly slipping away from them.

Sheffield Wednesday moved off the bottom of the Premiership table for the first time since August thanks to a shock 1-0 victory over Spurs at White Hart Lane.

It was under-fire Wednesday's second successive victory and with Watford losing the relegation six-pointer against Bradford, the Owls leapfrogged the Hornets at the bottom.

The all-important goal came against the run of play as Niclas Alexandersson netted his sixth of the season.

A clever lob into the box by Gerald Sibon found Wim Jonk and the Dutchman coolly laid it off for Alexandersson to firmly bury a right foot drive.

Meanwhile at Valley Parade, Bradford battled to a 3-2 triumph over Graham Taylor's Watford.

Peter Beagrie put Bradford in front from the penalty spot on 25 minutes after Watford's Des Lyttle was adjudged to have brought down Dean Windass only for Micah Hyde to level after 33 minutes.

But Gareth Whalley boosted the Bantams when he ran through to restore the lead after 37 minutes.

In the second half Bradford continued to dominate and Andy O'Brien put his own goal nightmare at Hillsborough last week behind him by grabbing the third on 49 minutes.

However a late goal from new-signing Heidar Helguson set up a grandstand finish but the Bantams held on.

At the other end of the table, Liverpool

failed to capitalise on the top three sitting out Saturday's programme as they were held to a goalless draw at Anfield by Middlesbrough.

And to add to Liverpool's frustrations they - and England - were dealt a blow with Michael Owen limping out of the action in the first half with a recurrence of his hamstring problems.

Liverpool were looking to close the gap at the top of the table but they failed to break down the visitors.

Indeed Gerard Houllier's side almost went a goal down when Paul Ince, returning to his old club, ran through but stopped when he thought he was offside only for the flag to stay down, missing a golden opportunity to put his side in front.

One of the few bright spots for the Anfield faithful was seeing Ince go into referee Steve Dunn's notebook for a tackle from behind on Vladimir Smicer.

Southampton kept just above the relegation zone as they bounced back from their hammering at Newcastle last Sunday with a 2-0 win over Everton at The Dell.

Everton suffered an early blow in the game when goalkeeper Paul Gerrard was forced off with a pulled muscle.

His place was taken by Steve Simonsen, formerly of Tranmere, who came on for his Everton debut.

But he could only get a hand on a 20-yard shot from Jo Tessem which gave the Saints the lead four minutes after half-time.

Matthew Oakley doubled the lead in the 56th minute. The combative midfielder picked up a ball midway inside the Everton half and ran at the heart of their defence.

He rode two tackles before curling a precise right-footed shot past Simonsen's dive.

Derby and Coventry, two sides desperate not to get dragged back into the relegation mire, had to settle for a point after a goalless draw at Pride Park.

Elsewhere Paulo Wanchope's first goals since November gave West Ham a 3-1 success over Leicester at Filbert Street.

Wanchope, who missed a sitter against Aston Villa last week, made no mistake after 13 minutes when he neatly converted a Frank Lampard pass to make it 1-0 to the Hammers.

But Emile Heskey, himself short of goals of late, levelled after 24 minutes for Leicester when he cut inside with purpose from the left and rifled past Shaka Hislop for 1-1.

In the fourth minute of first-half injury-time, Wanchope claimed his and West

Ham's second when he intercepted a Michael Carrick shot and defeated Pegguy Arphexad from a narrow angle.

Paolo Di Canio made it 3-1 on the hour mark to Harry Redknapp's men and that was how it stayed.

Newcastle's fine recent run came to a halt as they lost 2-0 against Wimbledon at Selhurst Park.

The Dons, unbeaten in 12 home games against the Geordies, were indebted to goals from Robbie Earle (48) and Marcus Gayle (69).

In the day's remaining game in the top flight, Aston Villa and Chelsea

**Norwich reject Andy Hunt came back to haunt his old club as his Carrow Road hat-trick maintained Charlton's position at the top of Division One.**

Hunt scored in the 42nd, 73rd and 78th minutes to reach 14 for the season and give a massive boost to Alan Curbishley's hopes of leading the Addicks back into the Premiership.

Their cause was bolstered by Manchester City's 1-0 defeat to Sheffield United at Bramall Lane.

It was another case of revenge as Michael Brown grabbed the winner against the club who sold him.

Barnsley made up ground in emphatic fashion by smashing Blackburn's recent good run at Oakwell.

Barnsley were coasting at 4-1 at half-time through Bruce Dyer, Craig Hignett - with his 100th league goal - Darren Barnard and Neil Shipperley.

Rovers' solitary reply had come from Per Frandsen but there was no joy for them after the break with Dyer hitting his second on 72 minutes to complete the rout.

Huddersfield moved back on the right track with Marcus Stewart netting in the 13th minute to bring a 1-0 win over Tranmere, while Ipswich were held at Bolton who led through Dean Holdsworth's 65th minute strike before Matt Holland grabbed a point for the East Anglians in the 85th minute.

Wolves were three up inside half an hour against Queen's Park Rangers through Steve Sedgley (22), Michael Branch (23) and Ade Akinbiyi (29).

But as Wolves eased up Rangers came back with late goals from Gavin



Michael Owen goes down with another injury scare.

Peacock and Steve Slade, forcing the Midlanders held on for a 3-2 win.

Walsall pulled off their third away win of the season with a thrilling 3-2 win at Crewe. Tom Bennett and Michael Ricketts gave the Saddlers a two-goal lead before Steve Macauley pulled one back from the penalty spot.

Kevin Harper restored the cushion on the stroke of half-time and, although Paul Tait reduced the arrears in the 67th minute Alex could not find an equaliser.

Fulham's challenge for a play off place took another body blow when Jack Lester's 56th minute goal gave Grimsby a 1-0 success at Craven Cottage, only their second away win of the season.

Injury-hit Birmingham came unstuck at Port Vale, going down 3-1. Tony Naylor gave Vale the lead in the 14th minute but Bryan Hughes equalised three minutes after the break.

Vale stormed grabbed the points with two goals in the last four minutes, through Tommy Widdrington's penalty and Tony Rougier.

Tony Dinning gave Stockport the lead with a 14th minute penalty after he was brought down by Portsmouth's Darren Moore at Edgeley Park, but it ended 1-1 when Ceri Hughes levelled in the 44th minute.

Nottingham Forest at least managed to keep a clean sheet but that was their only consolation in a drab 0-0 draw with West Bromwich Albion.

#### Aston Villa (0) 0 Chelsea (0) 0

**Aston Villa:** James, Ehiogu, Southgate, Barry, Watson (Delaney 60), Taylor, Boateng, Merson, Wright, Joachim (Vassell 46), Carbone, Vassell (Stone 63).

**Subs Not Used:** Thompson, Cutler.

**Chelsea:** De Goey, Lambourde, Leboeuf (Hogh 53), Thome, Harley, Morris, Wise, Deschamps, Poyet (Flo 74), Weah, Sutton (Zola 74).

**Subs Not Used:** Ambrosetti, Cudicini.

**Att:** 33,704

#### Bradford (2) 3 Watford (1) 2

**Bradford:** Clarke (Davison 74), Halle, Wetherall, O'Brien, Jacobs, Lawrence, McCall, Whalley (Redfern 77), Beagrie, Windass, Saunders (Westwood 90).

**Subs Not Used:** Blake, Sharpe.

**Goals:** Beagrie 25 pen, Whalley 37, O'Brien 49.

**Watford:** Chamberlain, Cox, Page, Palmer, Robinson, Lyttle, Miller (Smith 68), Hyde, Perpetuini (Bonnot 68), Helguson, Gravelaine.

**Subs Not Used:** Day, Smart, Gudmundsson.

**Booked:** Lyttle.

**Goals:** Hyde 33, Helguson 88.

**Att:** 16,864.

#### Derby (0) 0 Coventry (0) 0

**Derby:** Poom, Laursen, Carbonari, Elliott (Kinkladze 46), Delap, Burley, Johnson, Bohinen, Schnoor, Strupar, Burton (Christie

61).

**Subs Not Used:** Nimni, Boertien, Oakes.

**Coventry:** Hedman, Telfer, Williams, Breen, Froggatt, Strachan (Quinn 77), Eustace (Gustafsson 81), McAllister, Whelan, Roussel, Keane.

**Subs Not Used:** Ogirzovic, Shaw, Normann.

**Att:** 28,381.

**Ref:** G Barber (Tring, Herts).

#### Leicester (1) 1 West Ham (2) 3

**Leicester:** Arphexad, Sinclair, Gilchrist, Elliott, Goodwin, Eadie, Campbell, Zagorakis (Stewart 67), Gunnlaugsson (Thomas 57), Heskey, Fenton.

**Subs Not Used:** Flowers, Dudfield, McCann.

**Booked:** Sinclair.

**Goals:** Heskey 24.

**West Ham:** Hislop (Forrest 26), Ruddock, Ferdinand, Margas, Lomas (Carrick 38), Cole, Lampard, Sinclair, Keller, Wanchope, Di Canio, Carrick (Minto 72).

**Subs Not Used:** Charles, Coyne.

**Booked:** Minto.

**Goals:** Wanchope 13, 45, Di Canio 60.

**Att:** 19,019

**Ref:** D Elleray (Harrow-on-the-Hill).

#### Liverpool (0) 0 Middlesbrough (0) 0

**Liverpool:** Westerveld, Carragher, Hyypia, Henchoz, Matteo, Thompson (Murphy 57), Hamann, Gerrard, Berger, Smicer (Newby 76), Owen (Meijer 28).

**Subs Not Used:** Staunton, Nielsen.

**Middlesbrough:** Schwarzer, Mustoe, Festa, Pallister, Vickers (Gavin 68), Fleming,

Cooper, Ince, Summerbell, Juninho, Campbell (Ricard 82).

**Subs Not Used:** Beresford, Maddison, Kilgannon.

**Booked:** Juninho, Ince, Ricard.

**Att:** 44,324.

**Ref:** S Dunn (Bristol).

#### Southampton (0) 2 Everton (0) 0

**Southampton:** Jones, Monk, Richards, Lundekvam, Benail, Tessem, Oakley (Soltvedt 72), Marsden, Boa Morte (Beresford 81), Pahars, Davies (Beattie 88).

**Subs Not Used:** Hughes, Moss.

**Booked:** Lundekvam, Marsden, Boa Morte, Pahars.

**Goals:** Tessem 47, Oakley 56.

**Everton:** Gerrard (Simonsen 6), Dunne (Moore 78), Gough, Weir, Unsworth (Ball 63), Collins, Hutchison, Pembroke, Barmby, Jeffers, Campbell.

**Subs Not Used:** Watson, Cadamarteri.

**Booked:** Unsworth, Weir, Barmby.

**Att:** 15,232

**Ref:** A D'Urso (Billerica).

#### Tottenham (0) 0 Sheff Wed (1) 1

**Tottenham:** Walker, Carr, Perry, Campbell, Edinburgh (Young 62), Anderson, Clemence (Nielsen 62), Sherwood, Ginola, Armstrong (Korsten 62), Iversen.

**Subs Not Used:** Baardsen, Dominguez.

**Sheff Wed:** Smicek, Nolan, Atherton, Walker, Hinchcliffe, Alexandersson, Jonk, Haslam, Quinn (Scott 73), Sibon, De Bilde (Donnelly 89).

**Subs Not Used:** Pressman, Sonner, Cresswell.

**Goals:** Alexandersson 38.

**Att:** 35,897

**Ref:** M Riley (Leeds).

#### Wimbledon (0) 2 Newcastle (0) 0

**Wimbledon:** Sullivan, Cunningham, Andersen, Hreidarsson, Kimble, Earle, Euell, Badir, Cort, Leaburn (Ardley 61), Gayle.

**Subs Not Used:** Heald, Andresen, Willmott, Francis.

**Goals:** Earle 48, Gayle 69.

**Newcastle:** Harper, Barton, Marcelino, Dabizas, Pistone, Solano, Speed, Gallacher (Domi 75), Dyer, Ferguson, Shearer.

**Subs Not Used:** Given, Ketsbaia, Hughes, Helder.

**Att:** 22,118

**Ref:** D Gallagher (Banbury).

#### Sunderland (0) 1 Leeds United (1) 2

**Sunderland:** Sorensen, Williams, Butler, Bould (Craddock 78), Gray (Holloway 45), Kilbane, Rae, Roy (Reddy 63), McCann, Schwarz, Phillips.

**Subs Not Used:** Marriott, Oster.

**Goals:** Phillips 52.

**Leeds:** Martyn, Kelly, Woodgate, Duberry, Harte, Wilcox, Bakke, Bowyer, McPhail, Bridges (Huckerby 74), Kewell.

**Subs Not Used:** Haaland, Robinson, Mills, Jones.

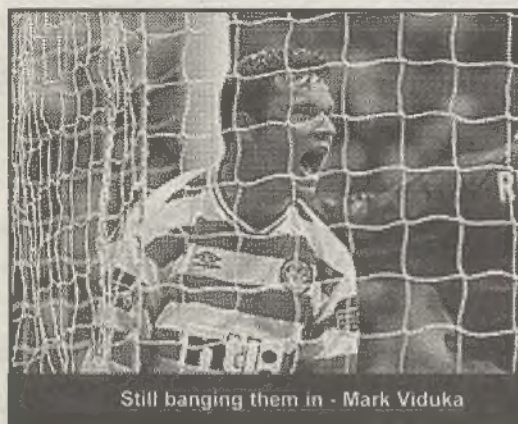
**Booked:** Bakke.

**Goals:** Wilcox 24, Bridges 50.

**Att:** 41,947



# CELTIC FALL BEHIND AFTER 1-1 DRAW



Still banging them in - Mark Viduka

**R**angers strengthened their position at the top of the Premier League with an emphatic 5-0 victory against Aberdeen.

Goals from Craig Moore, Giovanni van Bronckhorst, Arthur Numan, Rod Wallace and Barry Ferguson took them seven points clear of Celtic.

Moore made the breakthrough in the 36th minute with a powerful header into the corner for only his second goal of the season following an inswinging corner from van Bronckhorst.

Dutch midfielder van Bronckhorst added the second with a snap shot from 25 yards that deceived veteran keeper Jim Leighton. Aberdeen were becoming demoralised and their misery increased two minutes before the break when Numan grabbed the third with a fine left-foot finish inside the area.

Wallace tapped the ball in to make it four on the hour mark after a surging run by Andrei Kanchelskis.

Turkey midfielder Tugay Kerimoglu came on for

his debut for the table toppers soon afterwards following his £1.3million move from Galatasaray.

And Rangers added a fifth goal in the 82nd minute with Barry Ferguson's first of the season after Wallace had played the ball into his path.

Celtic's title hopes were dealt a blow as they were held to a 1-1 draw at Kilmarnock.

The Bhoys are now six points behind their Old Firm rivals Rangers in the Scottish Premier Division, with the Gers having a game in hand.

Mark Viduka was the first to benefit on 31 minutes when his close-range strike came off a defender to send the keeper the wrong way.

However, Killie were level nine minutes later when a Mark Reilly drive struck Vidar Riseth and flew into the net.

Elsewhere the winter break failed to have a galvanising effect on third-placed Dundee United and fifth-placed Hibernian at Ibrox who produced a tame goalless draw at Tannadice Park.

Both sides have enjoyed recent trips to warmer climes and gave every indication that they wished they were still enjoying the sun.

Motherwell stay in fourth after a 1-1 draw with St Johnstone.

A Graham Jones goal gave St Johnstone a first-half lead at McDiarmid Park but Motherwell snatched a point when Stephen McMillan fired home with five minutes remaining.

In the other match Hearts, despite missing front men Gary McSwegan and Stephanie Adam through injury, had enough fire power to see off Dundee 2-0 at Tynecastle. Gary Wales clinically despatched a low shot past Douglas from eight yards to make it 1-0 on 17 minutes before Darren Jackson doubled their advantage shortly after half-time.

**Dundee Utd (0) 0 Hibernian (0) 0**  
**Dundee Utd:** Combe, De Vos, Pascual, Partridge, Hannah, Jonsson, Telesnikov, Easton (Worrell 88), Preget, Mathie (Hamilton 72), Thompson (Ferraz 82).  
**Booked:** Partridge.

**Hearts (1) 2 Dundee (0) 0**  
**Hearts:** Niami, Naysmith, Pressley, Petric, Murray, Locke (Leclercq 74), Fulton, Severin, Wales (Juanjo 89), Cameron, Jackson. **Subs Not Used:** Roussel, Simpson, Tomaschek.  
**Booked:** Juanjo.  
**Goals:** Wales 17, Jackson 50.  
**Dundee:** Douglas, Van Eijs (Banger 56), Tweed, Smith, Ireland, Sharp, McKinnon, Billio (Boyack 72), Grady (Bayne 38), Rae, Falconer.  
**Subs Not Used:** Langfield, Wilkie.  
**Booked:** Billio, Ireland.  
**Att:** 13,112

**Rangers (3) 5 Aberdeen (0) 0**  
**Rangers:** Kios, Vidmar, Moore, Amoroso, Numan, Ferguson, Kanchelskis, Van Bronckhorst (Kerimoglu 72), Albertz (Reyna 67), Wallace, Dods (McCann 60).  
**Booked:** Moore, Vidmar.  
**Goals:** Moore 36, Van Bronckhorst 38, Numan 43, Wallace 60, Ferguson 82.  
**Aberdeen:** Leighton, Perry, Whyte,

Anderson, McAllister, Jess (Winters 46), Solberg, Bernard (Belabed 80), Dow, Stavrum, Zerouali (Rutkiewicz 80).

**Booked:** Bernard, Perry.  
**Att:** 50,023

**St Johnstone (1) 1 Motherwell (0) 1**  
**St Johnstone:** Main, McCluskey, Weir, Griffin, Bolland, Kane, O'Halloran, McBride, O'Neil, Jones, Lowndes (Simao 64).

**Subs Not Used:** Ferguson, McAnespie, Dods, McMahon.

**Booked:** Jones.

**Goals:** Jones 44.

**Motherwell:** Goram, Doesburg (Corrigan 34), Denham, Kemble, McMillan, Valakari, Townsley (Nevin 46), Davies, Twaddle (Nicholas 85), Spencer, Goodman.

**Booked:** Valakari, Kemble, Spencer.

**Goals:** McMillan 85.

**Att:** 4,158

**Kilmarnock (1) 1 Celtic (1) 1**  
**Kilmarnock:** Meldrum, MacPherson, Lauchlan, Dindeleux, Baker, Mitchell (Mahood 85), Durrant, Holt (Canero 89), Reilly, Cocard, Smith (Jeffrey 85).  
**Subs Not Used:** Marshall, Hessey.  
**Booked:** Smith, MacPherson, Lauchlan.

**Goals:** Reilly 40.

**Celtic:** Gould, Riseth, Mjallby, Boyd, McNamara, Blinker (Wright 72), Petrov, Berkovic (Johnson 82), Healy, Moravcik, Viduka.

**Subs Not Used:** Kerr, Burchill, Petta.

**Booked:** Boyd, Petrov, McNamara.

**Goals:** Viduka 31.

**Att:** 14,126

## ENGLISH PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Leeds	22	15	2	5	37	25	47	12
Man Utd	19	13	4	2	50	25	43	25
Arsenal	22	13	4	5	41	22	43	19
Liverpool	23	12	5	6	34	20	41	14
Sunderland	23	11	5	7	37	31	38	6
Chelsea	23	10	7	6	31	22	37	9
Tottenham	23	10	5	8	34	27	35	7
West Ham	22	8	8	6	28	25	32	3
Aston Villa	23	8	7	8	22	23	31	-1
Leicester	23	9	4	10	32	34	31	-2
Everton	23	7	9	7	37	34	30	3
Coventry	22	7	8	7	30	24	29	6
Wimbledon	23	6	10	7	34	37	28	-3
Middlesbrough	21	8	4	9	24	30	28	-6
Newcastle	23	7	6	10	39	39	27	0
Derby	23	6	5	12	23	33	23	-10
Southampton	22	6	5	11	26	37	23	-11
Bradford	23	5	6	12	19	35	21	-16
Sheff Wed	22	4	4	14	20	46	16	-26
Watford	23	4	2	17	21	50	14	-29

## ENGLISH DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Charlton	28	18	5	5	52	28	59	24
Man City	28	17	4	7	44	22	55	22
Barnsley	28	17	4	7	59	39	55	20
Ipswich	28	15	8	5	47	28	53	19
Huddersfield	28	15	5	8	45	29	50	16
Wolverhampton	28	11	9	8	37	32	42	5
Stockport	28	11	8	9	33	36	42	-3
Blackburn	27	10	10	7	35	30	40	5
QPR	28	10	9	9	37	34	39	3
Fulham	28	9	12	7	25	25	39	0
Birmingham	27	10	8	9	37	31	38	6
Norwich	28	10	8	10	27	30	38	-3
Bolton	27	9	9	9	35	31	36	4
Tranmere	28	10	6	12	37	38	36	-1
Crystal Palace	28	9	8	11	40	45	35	-5
Sheff Utd	28	9	7	12	35	43	34	-8
Grimsby	28	9	6	13	32	48	33	-16
Nottm Forest	28	7	8	13	29	36	29	-7
West Brom	28	5	14	9	24	32	29	-8
Crewe	28	7	7	14	27	37	28	-10
Walsall	28	7	7	14	31	45	28	-14
Port Vale	27	6	9	12	31	37	27	-6
Portsmouth	28	5	9	14	31	45	24	-14
Swindon	28	3	9	16	20	49	18	-29

## ENGLISH DIVISION TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Wigan	27	15	11	1	48	22	56	26
Bristol Rovers	27	17	5	5	43	21	56	22
Preston	26	16	7	3	46	23	55	23
Millwall	28	14	9	5	43	29	51	14
Burnley	26	13	8	5	37	22	47	15
Stoke	27	13	8	6	38	24	47	14
Notts County	28	12	7	9	39	30	43	9
Gillingham	25	12	6	7	44	33	42	11
Brentford	28	11	7	10	38	38	40	0
Luton	27	10	7	10	37	38	37	-1
Wycombe	28	9	9	10	35	36	36	-1
Bournemouth	28	10	5	13	39	43	35	-4
Bristol City	27	7	13	7	31	31	34	0
Oldham	27	9	7	11	29	32	34	-3
Colchester	28	9	7	12	38	53	34	-15
Bury	25	7	10	8	38	35	31	3
Wrexham	26	6	10	10	25	37	28	-12
Scunthorpe	26	7	6	13	26	42	27	-16
Cardiff	27	5	10	12	26	37	25	-11
Oxford Utd	26	6	7	13	24	39	25	-15
Blackpool	27	4	10	13	30	47	22	-17
Reading	26	4	10	12	29	46	22	-17
Cambridge Utd	26	4	8	14	32	41	20	-9
Chesterfield	26	3	9	14	15	31	18	-16

## ENGLISH DIVISION THREE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Rotherham	28	16	5	7	46	19	53	27
Barnet	28	15	8	5	42	29	53	13
Swansea	27	16	5	6	30	17	53	13
Darlington	27	13	8	6	37	21	47	16
Hartlepool	28	14	4	10	38	29	46	9
Northampton	28	13	6	9	34	26	45	8
Rochdale	27	12	7	8	30	23	43	7
Halifax	28	12	7	9	32	29	43	3
Macclesfield	28	12	6	10	40	37	42	3
Peterborough	26	12	6	8	37	35	42	2
Torquay	27	11	8	8	37	31	41	6
Plymouth	26	10	10	6	34	28	40	6
Cheltenham	27	11	6	10	27	25	39	2
Brighton	27	9	8	10	38	32	35	6
Mansfield	26	10	5	11	35	37	35	-2
Lincoln City	26	9	7	10	40	43	34	-3
Southend	28	9	7	12	38	44	34	-6
Hull	27	8	8	11	26	28	32	-2
York	27	6	9	12	27	38	27	-11
Exeter	27	7	6	14	29	44	27	-15
Leyton Orient	27	6	7	14	24	35	25	-11
Shrewsbury	27	6	6	15	23	41	24	-14
Carlisle	27	5	7	15	26	45	22	-19
Chester	28	4	4	20	24	58	16	-34

## SCOTTISH PREMIER LEAGUE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Rangers	18	15	2	1	50	14	47	36
Celtic	19	13	2	4	54	17	41	37
Dundee Utd	20	9	4	7	25	29	31	-4
Motherwell	18	7	7	4	29	31	28	-2
Hibernian	21	6	8	7	32	35	26	-3
Hearts	19	6	5	8	28	28	23	0
St Johnstone	19	5	6	8	19	24	21	-5
Dundee	18	6	1	11	21	30	19	-9
Kilmarnock	18	2	7	9	18	28	13	-10
Aberdeen	19	3	3	13	20	60	12	-40

## SCOTTISH DIVISION ONE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
St Mirren	22	14	5	3	51	26	47	25
Dunfermline	23	12	8	3	41	22	44	19
Raith	23	12	6	5	42	28	42	14
Falkirk	24	12	5	7	43	33	41	10
Livingston	22	11	6	5	40	28	39	12
Inverness CT	23	7	8	8	36	35	29	1
Ayr	23	7	5	11	26	32	26	-6
Greenock Morton	23	6	5	12	34	42	23	-8
Airdrie	24	5	6	13	17	45	21	-28
Clydebank	23	0	4	19	13	52	4	-39

## SCOTTISH DIVISION TWO

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Clyde	20	10	6	4	27	15	36	12
Alloa	19	7	10	2	24	19	31	5
Stranraer	22	6	11	5	29	24	29	5
Arbroath	21	7	8	6	31	31	29	0
Stirling	21	8	4	9	41	37	28	4
Ross County	18	8	4	6	21	19	28	2
Partick	21	7	6	8	21	23	27	-2
Stenhousemuir	20	7	4	9	25	27	25	-2
Hamilton	21	5	7	9	22	28	22	-6
Queen of South	21	5	4	12	26	44	19	-18

## SCOTTISH DIVISION THREE

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts	GD
Queen's Park	21	11	5	5	32	24	38	8
East Fife	20	10	4	6	24	21	34	3
Berwick	20	9	6	5	30	17	33	13
Forfar	19	8	8	3	36	21	32	15
Cowdenbeath	22	9	5	8	30	25	32	5
Dumbarton	20	9	3	8	32	31	30	1
East Stirling	19	7	4	8	17	21	25	-4
Montrose	21	7	3	11	24	33	24	-9
Brechin	20	5	3	12	23	34	18	-11
Albion	20	3	5	12	19	40	14	-21



# NATIONAL SOCCER LEAGUE - ROUND NINETEEN

## CARLTON v SYDNEY OLYMPIC

1	Dean Anastasiadis	1	Jim Kourtis
2	Dave McPherson	2	Scott Thomas
3	Craig Deans	3	Chris Zoricich
4	Simon Colosimo	4	Peter Tsekenis
5	Sean Douglas	5	Scott Baillie
6	Andrew Marth	6	Ante Juric
7	Stuart Slater	7	Zlatko Arambasic
8	Mark Atkinson	8	Marcus Phillips
9	Alex Moreira	9	Pablo Cardozo
10	Lubo Lapsansky	10	Brett Emerton
11	Archie Thompson	11	Chris Kalantzis
12	Mike Conroy	12	Sebastian Sinozic
13	Steve Martin	14	Gabriel Mendez
14	John Markovski	15	Lindsay Willson
15	Con Anthopoulos	17	Paul Kohler
16	David Terminello	18	John Kyriazopoulos
17	Joe Tricarico	19	Nick Carle
18	David Della Rocca	20	George Bouhoutsos
19	Serdar Pir	21	Lee Miot
20	Adrian Cagaj	22	Pete Zorbas
21	Andrew Packer	23	Dylan Macallister
22	Angelo Moutsopoulos	24	Norman Tome
23	Colin Azzopardi	25	Hussein Jomaa
24	Joshua Kennedy	26	Adam Ciantar
		30	John Karoubas

Venue: Olympic Park - Friday 28 January 2000 7.30PM  
 Head to Head: Played 4 Carlton wins: 0 Olympic wins: 3 Draws 1  
 Last Week: Carlton 1-0 home win over Spirit  
 Olympic 6-0 home win South Melbourne

## ADELAIDE FORCE v MARCONI STALLIONS

1	Vilson Knezevic	1	Michael Turnbull
2	Ivan Zelic	2	Chad Gibson
3		3	Mark Babic
4		4	
5	Alex Tobin	5	Dominic Longo
6	Carlo Talladira	6	Pan-Keum Kim
7	Damian Mori	7	Christian Care
8	Carl Veart	8	Darren McDonald
9	Nick Sabljak	9	Zeljko Babic
10	Aurelio Vidmar	10	Brad Maloney
11		11	Mike Smith
12	Nathan Day	12	
13	John Fusco	13	Danny Invincible
14	Michael Cartwright	14	Buddy Farah
15	Louis Brain	15	Pierluigi di Gla
16	Matthew Kemp	16	Alex Duric
17	Angelo Costanzo	17	Francis Awaritefe
18	Bradley Hassell	18	Harry Kari
19		19	Brendan Ranaud
20		20	David Aceski
21	Dong Ki Kim	21	Paolo Marchesini
22	Attilio Hornjik	22	Kris Trajanovski
23	Jonathan Lihou	23	Vlado Zoric
		24	Josala Junior Sauturaga
		26	Daniel Severino

Venue: Hindmarsh Stadium - Friday 28 January 2000 8.00PM  
 Head to Head: Played 47 Force wins: 17 Stallions wins: 22 Draws 8  
 Last Week: Force 1-0 loss away to Breakers  
 Stallions 0-1 away win over Strikers

## CANBERRA COSMOS v GIPPSLAND FALCONS

1	David Millin	1	Bojo Jevdjovic
2	Toplica Popovich	2	Dean Fak
3	Danny Burt	3	Manny Gotis
4	Nicholas Purdue	4	Mehmed Durakovic
5	Jason Polak	5	Jeff Hopkins
6	David Winnie	6	Brian MacNichol
7	Daniel Watkins	7	Andy Vargas
8	Alex Castro	8	Clayton Bell
9	Michael Musitano	9	Robbie Puca
10	David Arranz	10	Sandy Robertson
11	Brian Hamilton	11	John Hutchinson
12	Harry James	12	Peter Kakos
13	Glen Kolpak	13	Adrian Savage
14	Ilija Prenzosi	14	Doug Marcina
15	Robbie Hooker	15	Jonathon Buhuglar
16	Nikola Mrdja	16	Juan Nilo
17	Geoff Howarth	17	Will Hastie
18	Grant Barlow	18	Michael Katz
19	Scott Conlon	19	Ivan Mandic
20	Elliot Zwangobani	20	Simon Miotto
21	PJ Roberts		
22	Ivo De Jesus		
23	Gabriel Gonzalez		
24	Angelo Konstantinou		

Venue: Bruce Stadium - Friday 28 January 2000 7.30PM  
 Head to Head: Played 9 Cosmos: 2 Falcons wins: 2 Draws 5  
 Last week: Cosmos 1-1 away draw with Knights  
 Falcons 4-0 away loss to Power

## BRISBANE STRIKERS v FOOTBALL KINGZ

1	Clint Bolton	1	Michael Utting
2	Glenn Gwynne	2	Chae Bunce
3	Shane Stefanutto	3	Riki Van Steeden
4	Andrew Davidson	4	Fabio Macollino
5	Matthew Belli	5	Jonathon Perry
6	Brad Ditton	6	Marcus Stergiopoulos
7	Shane Smeltz	7	Wynton Rufer
8	David Pilic	8	Chris Jackson
9	Paul Foster	9	Fred de Jong
10	Wayne Srhoj	10	Dino Mennillo
11	Greg Di Losa	11	Robbie Middleby
12	Pete Dwyer	12	Harry Ngata
13	Stuart McClaren	13	Levent Osman
14	Jade North	14	Batrum Suri
15	Leo Langone	15	Ivan Vichelich
16	Peter Grierson	16	Lee Jones
17	Jeremy Harris	17	Maciel Edmilson
18	Nick Meredith	18	Stuart Riddle
19	Wade Baldwin	19	Leigh Kenyon
20	Daniel Duke	20	Jason Batty
		21	David Moya
		22	Aaron Silva
		23	Simon Eaddy

Venue: Suncorp Metway Stadium - Saturday 29 January 2000 7.00PM  
 Head to Head: Played N/A  
 Last week: Strikers 0-1 home loss to Stallions  
 Kingz - no game

## SYDNEY UNITED v MELBOURNE KNIGHTS

1	John Crawley	2	Joey Rayher
2	Ray Younis	3	Ivan Jolic
3	Mark Racker	4	Ante Kovacevic
4	Velimir Kupresak	5	Jason Vukadin
5	Eddie Bosnar	6	John Didulica
6	Vince Savocca	7	Mark Silic
7	Mirko Jurilj	8	Dragi Nastevski
8	Nahuel Arrarte	9	Ivan Kelic
9	Mario Jerman	10	Paul Urlovic
10	Ante Moric	11	Miljo Trupkovic
11	Tom Pondeljak	12	Murtala Toyin Abbas
12	Tom Maric	13	Lance Plunkett
13	Matthew Zec	14	Paul Magdic
14	Kain Rastall	15	Ransford Banini
15	Aytec Genc	16	Alex Kriatzoglou
16	Joe Moric	17	Brandon Vassalo
17	Nick Bosevski	18	Roddy Vargas
18	Steve Bozinovski	19	Zlatko Maglic
19	Greg Saric	20	Martin John
20	Steve Tollos	21	Zeljko Susa
21	Zvonko Uslebrka	22	Steven Tillinger
22	Colin Luff	23	Michael Reda
23	Terry Palapanis	24	Hrvoje Matkovic
24	Andy Rakic	25	Adrian Cervinski
25	Ante Deak	26	Marko Prskalo
30	Brett Hughes	30	Lupce Acevski

Venue: Sydney United Sports Centre - Sunday 30 January 2000 6.00PM  
 Head to Head: Played 28 United wins: 8 Knights wins: 12 Draws 8  
 Last week: United 1-0 away loss to Wolves  
 Knights 1-1 home draw with Cosmos

## PERTH GLORY v WOLLONGONG WOLVES

1	Robert Trajkovski	1	Leslie Pogliacomini
2	Jamie Harnwell	2	George Souris
3		3	Alvin Ceccoli
4		4	Robert Stanton
5	Vinko Buljbasic	5	David Cervinski
6	Gareth Naven	6	Matthew Horsley
7	Scott Miller	7	Paul Reid
8	Troy Halpin	8	Anthony Surjan
9	Alistair Edwards	9	Sasho Dimoski
10	Bobby Despotoski	10	Stuart Young
11	Kasey Wehrman	11	Scott Chipperfield
12	Peter Buljan	12	Nell Harlock
13	James Afkos	13	Noel Spencer
14	Dion Valle	14	Saso Petrovski
15	Edgar Junior	15	David Huxley
16	Con Boutsianis	16	Peter Lahanas
17	Vas Kalogeracos	17	Esala Masi
18	Hamilton Thorp	18	Chad Bishop
19	John Carbone	19	Paul Dimech
20	Tony Franken	20	Daniel Bertrame
21	Ivan Ergic	21	Christian Zelvis
22	Jason Petkovic		

Venue: Perth Oval - Sunday 30 January 2000 5.00PM  
 Head to Head: Played 6 Glory wins: 2 Wolves wins: 3 Draws 1  
 Last Week: N/A  
 Wolves 1-0 home win over United



**LIVE SATURDAY 29 JANUARY 7.30**  
**C7 SPORT CHANNEL 13**

**PARRAMATTA POWER V  
 NORTHERN SPIRIT**



**POWER**

- 1 Andrew Crews
- 2 David Barrett
- 3 Michael Santalab
- 4 Steve Eagleton
- 5 Richard Pless
- 6 Joe Vrkic
- 7 Jacob Burns
- 8 Walter Ardono
- 9 Mile Sterjovski
- 10 Joel Griffiths
- 11 Steve Berry
- 12 Stephen Laybutt
- 13 Milan Blagojevic
- 14 John Angelucci
- 15 Danny Townsend
- 16 Mark Byrne (below)
- 17 Danny Kukucka
- 18 Lachlan Campbell
- 19 Matt Thompson
- 20 Barney Smith
- 21 Ahmed Elrich
- 23 John Gibson
- 28 Peter Bennett
- 29
- 30 Mike Gibson

**SPIRIT**

- 1 John Perosh
- 2 Robert Enes
- 3 Matthew Langdon
- 4 Matthew Bingley
- 5 Mark Rudan
- 6 Luke Casserley
- 7 Robbie Slater
- 8 Tony Perinich
- 9 David Seal
- 11 Troy Cranney
- 12 Simon Catanzaro
- 13 Philip Moss
- 14 Shane Lyons
- 15 Anthony Faria
- 17 Paul Bilokapic
- 18 Paul Wearne
- 19 Graham Arnold
- 20 Jess Van Stratten
- 21 Michael Cunico
- 22 Paul Henderson
- 23 Adam Snyder
- 24 Elvis Olic
- 25 Ryan Griffiths
- 26 Jack Sobczyk
- 27 Adam Griffiths
- 28 Abbas Saad
- 29 Ian Crook
- 30 Sean Cranney



**Venue:** Parramatta Stadium  
**Saturday 29 January 7.30PM**  
**Head-to-Head:** N/A  
**Power:**  
**Spirit:**  
**Draws:**  
**Last Week:** Power 4-0 home win over Falcons  
 Spirit 1-0 away loss to Carlton



**SUNDAY 30 JANUARY 7.30**  
**C7 SPORT CHANNEL 13**

**SOUTH MELBOURNE  
 V NEWCASTLE BREAKERS**



**1**

- 1 Milan Udvaracz
- 2 Steve Iosifidis
- 3 Fausto de Amicis
- 4 Nick Orlie
- 5 Con Blatsis
- 6 David Clarkson
- 7 Steve Panopoulos
- 8 Vaughan Coveny
- 9 Paul Trimboli
- 10 Michael Curcija (below)
- 11 John Anastasiadis
- 12 Richie Alagich
- 13 Adrian Cuzzupe
- 14 Anthony Magnacca
- 15 Goran Lozanovski
- 16 George Goutzoulis
- 17 Jim Tsaklinis
- 18 Robert Liparoti
- 19 Tasos Psonis
- 20 Chris Jones
- 21
- 22 Mustafa Mustafa

**1**

- 1 Bob Catlin
- 2 Shane Pryce
- 3 Andrew Roberts
- 4 Adam Sanderson
- 5 Todd McManus
- 6 Glenn Sprod
- 7 Travis Dodd
- 8 Mark Wilson
- 9 Chris Tancheski
- 10 John Buonavoglia
- 11 Luke Tomich
- 12 Robert Anglevski
- 13 Brad Wleczorek
- 14 Greg Owens
- 15 Joshua Ferguson
- 16 Vasko Trpcovski
- 17 Paul Wheeler
- 18 Andrew Harper
- 19 Chad Mansley
- 20 Bradley Swancott
- 21 Peter Juchniewicz
- 22 Glenn Moore
- 23 Damien Smith
- 30 Jason Kos



**Venue:** Bob Jane Stadium  
**Sunday 30 January 6.00PM**  
**Head to Head:** 15  
**Souths:** 10  
**Breakers:** 2  
**Draws:** 3  
**Last Week:** Souths 6-0 away loss to Sydney Olympic  
 Breakers 1-0 home win over Adelaide Force



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